

**ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION
PROVISIONING IN ONE EDUCATION DISTRICT IN THE EASTERN CAPE
PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

BY

MUFUTAU MONSURU ATANDA

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PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

A THESIS

BY

MUFUTAU MONSURU ATANDA

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SUPERVISOR

PROFESSOR CHINEDU OKEKE

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, Mufutau Monsuru Atanda hereby solemnly declare that, to the best of my knowledge and understanding, this thesis titled “The engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning in one education district in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa” is my own original work; where I have used information from the published or unpublished work of other scholars, I have acknowledged such sources both in the text and on the list of references. All the tables were produced by me with the exception of where I have acknowledged that they were taken from another source. This thesis has not been submitted and will not be presented at any other university for an equivalent or any other degree award.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to: Almighty God for keeping me alive;

My dear wife, Olayinka;

My children, Funmilola, Michael, and Favour;

My late father;

My Mother; and

Mr and Mrs Gberinola who wished me well in all my endeavours

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Thanks to God Almighty and my Lord Jesus Christ for saving me, for the loving kindness, infinite mercies, provision and blessings throughout my course of study. May God's continual light of guidance and protection continue to shine for me in all my endeavours forever (Amen).

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning in one education district in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Significantly, a specific programme to get fathers engaged in the early childhood of their children is not well addressed by the National Integrated Early Childhood Development (ECD) Policy of 2015, despite the notion that early childhood education provisioning demands the total involvement of multiple partners and other stakeholders. The research drew its theoretical framework from the ecological system theory. Ecological system theory argues that, in order to understand human development, one must consider the entire ecological system in which growth occurs. This study utilized the quantitative research approach to obtain primary data in line with the positivist paradigm. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The instruments were scrutinized by the research supervisor to ensure validity and were pre-tested in the field study. The reliability was obtained at a Cronbach's alpha coefficient, of 0.94 and 0.96. The results were presented in the form of pie chart and grouped into different tables of sixteen. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, Analysis of Variance and t-test were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Two structured questionnaire instruments were used in the study, Principal and Teachers' Views Questionnaire (PTVQ) and Father's and Mother's Views Questionnaire (FMVQ). The Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample for this study. To this end, 16 principals, 12 teachers, 18 mothers and 18 fathers of children in the selected sample served as respondents. The results reveal that stakeholders have positive views about fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning. The result indicated that schools do provide support mechanisms to encourage fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning. The results showed that a number of strategies are used by the schools. The result also indicated that functional policy and practice will no doubt improve and encourage the engagement of fathers in ECCE provisioning. Furthermore, the study concluded that stakeholders have positive views on the engagement of fathers in ECCE provisioning. The study recommends that all stakeholders and media houses should be involved in the effective dissemination of information, and that the South African government should advocate for ECCE policies that lay out concrete commitment and guidelines for fathers and, above all, symposia, lectures, workshops, and seminars should be organized for fathers.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DoBE	Department of Basic Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoSD	Department of Social Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
FMVQ	Fathers and Mothers' Views on Education Questionnaire
FREC	Faculty Research and Ethical Committee
GSA	Government of South Africa
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PTVQ	Principal and Teachers Views in Education Questionnaire
RSA	Republic of South Africa
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UREC	University of Fort Hare Ethical Clearance Committee

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0. The research context

Despite the reported importance of fathers in the early childhood development sector and in the overall development of the child (Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016), the lack of involvement or absence of fathers in early childhood provisioning remains significant. Previous researchers within South Africa (Richter, Desmond, Hosegood, Madhavan, Makiwane, Makusha, Morrel & Swartz, 2012; Mufutau, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016) have noted the conspicuous absence of fathers in various early childhood development activities, including the preschool classrooms and centre activities, meetings, workshops, conferences, and even during school runs by parents. The absence of fathers in these activities is easily noticeable.

Notwithstanding, children's complete development appears to rest on whether they have a supportive and nurturing environment that guarantees their access to a full complement of services in terms of health, education, care, protection, and most importantly, on whether the participation of both parents is guaranteed (Powell, Son, File & San Juan, 2010; Jeffries, 2012). However, the current situation, in which fathers are seen not to be present in the everyday activities of children, raises very serious doubts over whether children's complete early development will ever be achieved. The involvement of fathers in Early Childhood Development (ECD)

activities, therefore, remains an issue of great concern, which provides an interesting research agenda prospect.

The present study, therefore, intends to explore the stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning in one Education District in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The researcher believes that the outcome of the present research will have implications with reference to ECCE policy and practice that will, ultimately, enable the effective engagement of fathers, not only in the Eastern Cape, but also for the Republic of South Africa in general.

1.1. Background to the Study

The holistic and complex nature of Early Childhood Development (ECD) provisioning demands the involvement of multiple partners across the board and other stakeholders, including parents, caregivers and teachers (DoSD & UNICEF, 2010; Atmore, Niekerk, & Ashley, 2012). Yet, while the participation of mothers in ECD provisioning has been widely reported in literature, fathers continue to be mainly absent in most ECD-related activities (Richter *et al.*, 2012; Okeke, 2014; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

Research evidence (Shears, Bubar & Hall, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016) reveals the overwhelming positive influences of fathers in the lives of children, which result in high levels of improvement in intelligence quotient (IQ), improvement in attendance rate, good

interpersonal relationship with peers, moral value, high completion rates, and the ability to continue in learning. Studies show that fathers' involvement in the education of children results in greater children educational outcomes (Pleck, 2010; Lamb, 2010; Wilson, 2015).

Research reports also demonstrate that the involvement of fathers in the education of their children helps bring about children's positive attitude towards learning, which results in an improved behaviour in school (Pleck, 2010; Huerta, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Higgins & Morley, 2014). In addition, studies show that when fathers are involved in the education of young children, either at home or at school, there is a greater level of improvement for children (Emerson, Fear, Fox & Sanders, 2012; Higgins & Morley, 2014).

Studies (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Shears *et al.*, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Wilson, 2015) reveal that fathers have a strong positive influence which results in the high level of academic performance, improvement in intelligence quotient (IQ), less drop-out rate, improvement in the attendance rate, good interpersonal relationship with peers, moral value, high completion rates, and the ability to continue in learning and improved social behaviour in the lives of their children, if they are involved. Furthermore, Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) argue that, when fathers are involved, children develop a close relationship and high level of security. Moreover, more studies emphasise that children's early years' education is laid on a good foundation when fathers are involved. These result in positive moral improvement, good social interpersonal relationships, improvement in psychosocial behaviour and high

graduation rates (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). In the United Kingdom, Potter, Walker and Keen (2012) explain that fathers, more especially the working fathers, are not visible in the early childhood care and education (ECCE) of their children due to the fact that the environments are mainly designed to meet the needs of mothers and their children. Potter *et al.* (2012) further note that in the ECCE teaching profession, there is little or no interest to work with males by some female members of staff that appear to feel more comfortable relating with females rather than they want to do with males.

Studies have shown that children whose fathers are not engaged in their education demonstrate poor educational outcomes and behavioural problems (Lamb, 2010; Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu & Mtshali, 2015; Noel, Stark, Redford & Zukerberg, 2015). In addition, Mashiya *et al.* (2015) and Noel *et al.* (2015) explain that children of non-engaged fathers are likely to succumb to or resort to drugs, resulting in behavioural deterioration, emotional imbalance, lower academic performance and health degradation. Earlier studies by Jackson and Andrew (2004) and Epstein (2005) revealed that the majority of fathers do not have enough time to be involved due to their poor social economic statuses; as a result, they end up looking for jobs outside their family environment which is a major challenge. A study in United States of America by Claycomb (2007) concurred with the earlier studies by Jackson and Andrew (2004) as well as Epstein (2005), which revealed that fathers encountered various challenges preventing them from active engagement in early childhood care and education (ECCE) of their children. These challenges range from lack of time,

language barriers, lack of confidence and fear of school (Claycomb, 2007). Significantly, the researcher believes that children who do not receive attention, good caring, affection and fatherly role modelling from a father figure are emotionally, socially, economically and physically deprived of benefits of life. Hence, there is a need for the reformation of the roles of fathers in the family, particularly in nurturing their children.

In their study of 'Model of factors acting as barrier', Hornby and Lafaele (2011) categorise the barriers facing parents with particular reference to fathers into four distinct areas: "individual parent and family factors, parent–teacher factors, children factors, and societal factors." More significantly, this was corroborated by a recent study by Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) which revealed enormous challenges hindering fathers from active engagement in the early education of their children, among such are: "staff and teacher attitudes, mothers' attitudes towards involving fathers, societal views regarding male involvement in child care and cultural beliefs, also, educational level of fathers..." (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016, p. 4). Okeke (2014) emphasises on the need for a strong and formidable national policy on parental involvement, especially fathers.

In the UK Head Start Programme, cellular phone calls and texting messages were introduced in support of existing home visiting as a strategy to involve fathers in early childhood care and education of their children. This yielded positive results for parental participation, particularly fathers, improved completion rates among children was achieved and communication between the teachers and parents became highly

effective (Henrich, 2013). Recent studies (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016) suggest a number of strategies that can promote parental engagement with particular reference to fathers. These strategies include: “home visits, parent-teacher games, schools debate and speech days, parent-teacher association, recruitment of male workers, father’s learning group discussions” (Okeke, 2014, pp. 7- 8; Change, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

Ironically, the new National integrated early childhood development policy document (Government of South Africa, GSA, 2015) appears to have focused mainly on the needs of mothers, children, and caregivers and is silent on fathers’ engagement as well as on specific programmes to get fathers involved in the education of their children. Unlike their female counterparts, the new policy document is specific on how programmes may support mothers and their children. This is best exemplified in paragraph 6 of page 28 (GSA, 2015) which emphasizes the need for adequate care and support for pregnant women in the workplace as well as soliciting for the intensive caring for HIV-positive mothers. The need for fathers to take paternity leave to be present for the arrival of the baby is not addressed. The possibility is high that an HIV-positive pregnant mother will be impregnated by an HIV-positive father and vice versa, hence, both must be equally treated. Numerous studies have noted that fathers in South Africa tend not to be visible in the early lives of their children (see for instance, Richter *et al.*, 2012; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015), yet, the new national integrated early childhood development policy document (GSA, 2015) has not shown how fathers may be engaged in the ECD programmes. The reality,

however, is that without the new policy on ECCE effectively initiating the framework for the engagement of fathers in such programmes, fathers' engagement in the lives of their children will continue to be an issue of discussion. Empirical evidence from the present study may perhaps enable that framework to be achieved.

The importance of parental involvement in the early years of childhood education of their children has been highlighted by various research studies (Okeke, 2014, Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). It should also be noted that specific programmes to get fathers' engagement in the early childhood of their children are not well addressed by the policy (GSA, 2015). The lack of involvement or absence of fathers in the lives of their children remains significant. The study by Mufutau (2015) examined the views of fathers on men's participation in early education of children, it was recommended that fathers must create strong bonds and be more involved in the lives of their children.

A study by Clyde (2016) on the involvement of fathers in the social development of children also suggests that fathers might not be aware of their social responsibility, while it still realised the importance of their involvement. Though both studies are conducted on the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children, Mufutau (2015) focuses on fathers' views, in terms of their participation, while Clyde (2016) focuses on the involvement of fathers in the social development of their children. In addition, Mufutau and Okeke (2016) focused only on factors affecting rural fathers in the participation of early childhood education of their children. Therefore, the gap that still remains to be filled is finding the views of stakeholders on the engagement of fathers

in early childhood care and education of their children. Fatherhood roles are not yet duly performed in South Africa, more especially amongst the young fathers who became parents while at school (Clyde, 2016). Previously, Mufutau (2015) also noted that these young fathers are incapable of being actively involved in the lives of their children. This is also corroborated by recent studies (Clyde, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). Nonetheless, fatherhood in South Africa is regarded as the act of being a father who is socially and physically connected to the children and takes active roles in the lives of the children without necessarily being a biological father (Richer & Morrell, 2006). Mufutau (2015) emphasized the need to adequately and effectively fulfil the roles of formidable fatherhood in the lives of the children. Hence, the complete development of children needs effective engagement of fathers to adequately fulfil their roles.

Father's involvement is still lacking in the ECCE and this may be as a result of traditional roles of fathers in the society or how the society perceives a father to be in nature (Wardle, 2008). Evidence from research indicates a high level of fathers' absence in the lives of their children in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2011; Richter *et al.*, 2012). Fathers' absence in their children's lives could have devastating effects on the children. For instance, factors such as emotional imbalance, behavioural disorder, lower IQ rate, high increase in dropout rate, and increase in absenteeism and low esteem are some of the negative consequences that may occur in the lives of children when fathers are not able to participate in their early education (Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015). More studies have

shown that when fathers do not engage in their children's lives, these children experience psychological depression and lead to lower levels of academic performance (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). For this reason, the importance of fathers' involvement has been explored by various researchers (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hopkins, 2013; Bhise & Sonawat, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Khewu & Adu, 2015). In addition, scholarly works reveal numerous challenges facing fathers' involvement in the early education of their children (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Potter *et al.*, 2012; Richter *et al.*, 2012; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

The non-engagement of fathers in the lives of their children could be as a result of urbanization that places a heavy burden on families, resulting in an influx of people, especially fathers, into cities in search of jobs. This is still leading to many nuclear families in South Africa having absent fathers who go out in search of better living conditions. Richter *et al.* (2012) observe that South Africa has the highest absent fathers in the lives of their children in the world. Fathers' absence could also be as a result of neglect from the mother of the child, where many single mothers decide to have children with married or younger fathers who will not have influence or authority on the child. Despite various research emphasizing the importance of fathers' involvement in the early years of their children's education (Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Clyde, 2016, Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016), empirical evidence from stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers remains scanty. The fact of the matter, however, is that, without investigating

the stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in the lives of their children, society will remain speculative about the effectiveness of fathers in the early childhood education of their children; how the National Integrated ECD policy (Government of South Africa, 2015) addresses the roles of fathers in ECCE at this stage is still not clear.

In addition, an increase in non-engagement of fathers could also be attributed to the high incidences of teenage pregnancy and pre-marital sex, which have led to many children being brought up without a father (Mufutau, 2015; Mncanca *et al.*, 2016). Despite these revelations, what is currently known about the views of stakeholders on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood education provisioning of their children is yet to be unfolded. This makes the present study imperative because of this perceived gap in knowledge about the involvement of fathers in ECCE.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Despite the fact that early childhood education provisioning demands the total involvement of multiple partners and other stakeholders, including parents, caregivers and teachers, fathers are still absent in the lives of children. Notably, the involvement of mothers has been widely reported on in literature, but fathers continue to be mainly absent in most ECD-related activities. If the foundational lives of the young ones are not well laid, particularly when fathers are not engaged, children may experience a negative effect which later affects their lives.

Research evidence acknowledges the importance of fatherhood in South Africa (Richter *et al.*, 2012; Okeke, 2014; Marcisz, 2013; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Clyde, 2016). South Africa still has the highest rate of fathers' absence in the lives of their children in the world (Statistics South Africa, 2011; Richter *et al.*, 2012).

Fatherhood roles are not fully practiced in South Africa, most especially for the young fathers who became parents while at school due to pre-marital sex and were, therefore, incapable of being involved in the lives of their children (Mufutau, 2015; Clyde, 2016). Evidence from research (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Shears *et al.*, 2011; Mishra, 2012; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016) reveals the overpowering positive influences of fathers in the lives of children, which result in high level of academic performance, improvement in intelligence quotient (IQ), less drop-out rate, improvement in the attendance rate at school, good interpersonal relationship with peers, moral value, high completion rates, and the ability to continue in learning.

Since fathers' involvement yields positive results in children's lives, the question of why children still perform poorly and engage in drug abuse still remains, which means that fathers' involvement is still questionable. Similarly, many studies have been conducted on parental engagement in the education of their children in South Africa; generally, most of those studies have sampled mainly female parents (Lemmer, 2007; Brown & Duku, 2008; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013). Parental engagement is of paramount significance for children's social and emotional development (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). However, many parents are not actively engaged in their children's education due to

social, economic and cultural barriers (Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Okeke & Mathwasa, 2016).

Evidence from the preliminary review of literature on parental engagement in the education of their children suggests that in terms of male and female parent's engagement, female parents appear to be more actively engaged (Brown & Duku, 2008; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015). Notwithstanding, it is possible that fathers may be engaged, but their engagement seems not to have received much publicity in literature. To help fill this gap in research, therefore, the present study seeks to explore stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning and implications for policy and practice.

1.2.1. Rationale for the Study

There are overwhelming positive influences of fathers' engagement in the lives of their children; this is supported by literature (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hopkins, 2013; Bhise & Sonawat, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Khewu & Adu, 2015). Scholars hold a view that children whose fathers are not engaged in their lives are likely to engage in drugs, have high failure rates, and lower attendance rates as well as lower academic performance (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Change, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). This suggests that fathers need to be adequately informed about their roles in the lives of their children. More importantly, fathers were not properly addressed by the National integrated early childhood

development policy in South Africa in terms of the programmes to get them engaged (GSA, 2015). However, literature reveals that South Africa has the highest father absence in the lives of their children in the world (Statistics South Africa, 2011; Richter *et al.*, 2012). According to researchers, fathers' absence is also most noticeable in the lives of their children in South Africa (Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015). These raised a serious concern; hence, there is an urgent need to explore the stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in the lives of their children.

1.2.2. Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions are part of the study:

The study assumes that fathers are not actively engaged in the lives of their children. Also, National integrated early childhood development policy and programmes (GSA, 2015) are not effectively designed to encourage actively engaged fathers in the lives of their children. This has serious implications that will possibly cripple fathers from effectively engaging in the early childhood education of their children. Efforts will be made by stakeholders as well as policy makers to assist fathers in taking effective roles in the lives of their children.

1.3. Main Research Question

How do stakeholders view the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning?

1.3.1. Sub-research Questions

The following sub-research questions have been formulated to guide the study:

- 1.3.1.1. What are principals and teachers' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning?
- 1.3.1.2. What are fathers and mothers' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning?
- 1.3.1.3. Which support mechanisms are in place to encourage fathers' engagement in the early childhood care and education provisioning?
- 1.3.1.4. What strategies are used by the schools to promote fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning?
- 1.3.1.5. How can policy and practice in fatherhood initiatives motivate improvement in fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning?

1.4. Research Hypotheses

- H₀1: There is no significant influence of principals'/teachers' educational attainment on their views on engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.
- H₀2: There is no significant influence of principals'/teachers' race on their views on engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.
- H₀3: There is no significant influence of fathers'/mothers' educational attainment on their views on engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

H₀4: There is no significant influence of fathers'/mothers' race on their views on engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

H₀5: There is no significant relationship between school's strategies provision and engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

H₀6: There is no significant relationship between support mechanism put in place by schools and engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

H₀7: There is no significant relationship between the policy practice in fatherhood initiative motivation and engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

1.5. Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the objectives of this study are to:

1.5.1. Identify principals'/teachers' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning.

1.5.2. Identify fathers'/mothers' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning.

1.5.3. Identify support mechanisms provided by stakeholders that encourage fathers' engagement in the early childhood care and education provisioning.

1.5.4. Examine strategies provided by schools to promote fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning.

1.5.5. Determine what policy and practice in fatherhood initiatives motivate the improvement in fathers' engagement in early childhood care and provisioning.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study was limited to pre-schools in eight selected schools and four hundred stakeholders in one Education District in the Eastern Cape. The performance of learners in Foundation Phase, Intermediate Phase, and High School in the Province is not only below expectation but also among the lowest compared to other Provinces in South Africa (Spaull, 2013). The study mainly focused on stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood education provisioning age 0 – 5 years. Participants in the study included pre-schools principals, school teachers, mothers and fathers of pre-schools (0-4years) and Grade R aspects of foundation phase, to cover the age range of 0 – 5 years of the foundation phase.

1.7. Significance of the Study

The empirical outcomes of this study may be used as a basis of information for teachers, parents, society, NGOs, and government that would assist fathers with positive engagement in the early childhood care and education of their children. This research will also have implications with the reference to ECCE policy and practice that will enable the effective engagement of fathers in early childhood education of their children in the Eastern Cape as well as in South Africa generally.

Schools and teachers are likely to profit from the result of the study which will hopefully provide necessary support mechanisms, good strategies, and implementation of policy and practice in fatherhood initiatives to motivate improvement in fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning. Children benefit greatly when there is cooperation between the schools and fathers, which will have a positive impact on the learning process. Furthermore, teachers might have adequate knowledge on how to assist the fathers, and the policy will be guided on how to accommodate fathers in the provision of early childhood education programmes.

The findings of this study might equip parents, particularly fathers, with the necessary information needed for them to play active roles in the lives of their children and provide necessary support for the optimal and holistic development of their children.

The society should campaign for policy that validates the significance of parental responsibility, particularly to fathers in their children's development. Also, policy makers, the local education district, provincial government and national government as well as NGOs might use the result of this study for futuristic plan programmes for fathers. Through this study, the Provincial Department of Education and National Department of Education will appreciate the necessity to design and implement a good programme that will promote effective engagement of fathers in early childhood education of their children. The study demonstrated the relationships that form the child's environment and development between the bio-ecological system theories,

according to which a child's own biology is a primary domain for facilitating the child's development. Schools and teachers should work to fortify the major relationship and create an environment that welcomes and promotes families.

It is hoped that the study might generate new knowledge on fathers' engagement in the lives of children in the early years of education, adding to the existing body of knowledge. The researcher is of the opinion that information from this study will have implications for policy and practice of promoting fathers' engagement in the education of their children.

1.8. Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in the context of this study

1.8.1. Childhood: Childhood is defined as the time for children to be in school and at play, to grow strong and be confident with the love and encouragement from their families and extended communities of caring adult (UNICEF). 'Child' also refers to a person under the age of 18 years (Department of Social Development, 2010: CHILDREN'S ACT & REGULATIONS, ACT 38 OF 2005). In this study, early childhood will be taken to mean children from the ages of 0 – 5 years of ECCE.

1.8.2. Father: Is defined as both a married and unmarried person who has parental responsibilities and rights in respect of the child: Act 38 of 2005, section 20 for the former and Act 38 of 2005, section 21 for the latter (Department of Social Development, 2010: ACT & REGULATIONS, ACT 38 OF 2005). In this study, father refers to a married and unmarried person, biological and non-biological/step-fathers

that is physical and socially connected and takes active roles in the lives of the children.

1.8.3. Stakeholders: Stakeholders are all the people who have vested interests in the education of children. In the context of this study, stakeholders refer to teachers, principals, mothers and fathers that take active roles in the educational lives of children.

1.8.4. Parent: “A parent includes a biological, foster or adoptive mother or father who is responsible for the care and protection of young child, who is in the child’s life and who loves the child and wants to protect the child” (Martin *et al.*, 2014, p. 12). In this study, a parent refers to a father, mother and caregiver who are responsible for the care and protection of the children to corroborate Act 38 of 2005.

1.8.5. Fathers’ engagement: In this study, fathers’ engagement refers to active involvement in the lives of the children by reading for them at home, helping them with their homework, attending school programmes, adequate provisioning, taking them to school, taking responsibilities for the children’s lives and being a happy father for the children.

1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents the review of literature towards determining the stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood education provisioning and implications for policy and practice. It was sub-divided into the following sub-sections: the theoretical framework underpinning this study, review of empirical studies on early childhood education and fathers' engagement. There is also a chapter summary.

1.9.1. Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological System Theory. Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that, in order to understand human development, one must consider the entire ecological system in which growth occurs (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The theory looks at a child's development within the context of the system of relationships that form a child's environment. Bronfenbrenner's theory defines complex 'layers' of environment, each having an effect on a child's development. The "bio-ecological system theory" calls attention to the fact that a child's own biology is a primary environment stimulating his or her development. The teamwork between components in children growing, his/her immediate family/community, environment and the societal background nourishes and guides his/her development. Changes or mismatch in any one layer will flow throughout other layers. To study a child's

development then, one must glance not only at the child and his/her immediate environment, but also at the relations of the larger environment.

If the child does not have the steady joint interaction with significant adults that is essential for development, such a child will not have the tools to discover the other parts of his/her environment. Children need cordial relationships that should be present in the child-parent relationship, or child to other important adult relationship. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bio-ecological system theory believes that the main relationship needs to be with someone who can offer a sense of caring that is meant to last a life time. This relationship must be promoted by a person or people within the immediate sphere of the child's influence. School and teachers should work to support the major relationship and create an environment that welcomes and promotes families (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Society should agitate for policy that supports the importance of parent's roles in particular reference to fathers in their children development.

The ecological environment is a "set of nested structures each inside the nest like a set of Russian dolls" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3). These are:

- Micro-system: This refers to structures close to the child; namely, the family, school, day care and neighbourhood. This lays the foundation of great influence on the child. The relationships at this level can be bi-directional (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), since the child's parents can influence the behaviour of the child and vice versa.

- Meso-system: This involves the relationships between the micro-systems in child's life (relationship between home and school, school and work place). This means that the family experience may be related to child's school experience. For example: If a child is neglected by parents, such a child may have a low chance of developing a positive attitude towards teachers and peers.
- Exo-system: this refers to a system that has no direct impact on the child (e.g. the parents' work place schedule). However, the policies and decisions that are made at a wider level can also indirectly affect the child. For example, if a parent cannot get enough time to attend parent-teacher meetings, communication barriers may occur between the school and parent, which may also have a negative impact on the child.
- Macro-system: This refers to institutions that have an indirect effect on the child (e.g. school policies, ethnic practices). These contain the attitudes, ideologies, values, law and customs of a particular culture or subculture. Each component interacts with the other, resulting in a highly complex environment in which the child develops. Here is a good example: High rate of divorce, which results in single parenthood, may adversely affect the lives of children.
- Chrono-system: This refers to institutions that have an indirect effect on the child as a result of changes within the timing of an event (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This may be social–historical contexts that may influence an individual. A good example is how divorce may affect not only the couple's relationship,

but also their children's behaviour, and children may negatively have been affected by this development.

Mncanca, Okeke and Fletcher (2016, p. 4) state that "the micro-system is a massive area comprising a large gamut of other elements." In this regard, fathers' participation was conceptualized in terms of proximal processes taking place between fathers and children (bio-psychological human organism) and between home and school (micro-systems).

The ecological system theory informed the current study in its attempt to establish the importance of multi-level environments and interactions among the micro, meso, and macro systems as key to child development, in short, teachers and parents' best account for educational differences in children's developmental outcomes. Similarly, the model provides a powerful tool for understanding the influences of these structures upon a child's life and how this influences other parts of their development, offers an understanding of broad aspects of teachers and parents, particularly the fathers, and also how policy helps to influence child development regarding the challenges facing fathers' engagement in early childhood education provisioning of their children.

1.10 Review of Empirical Studies on Early Childhood Care and Education and Father's Participation.

1.10.1 Government of South Africa (2015) ECD Policy and Early Childhood Care and Education in the South African Context

The new ECD policy document and programme also acknowledge the importance of parental engagement in the early life of children. Ironically, the GSA (2015), ECD policy and ECD programme focuses on mothers, children, caregivers, and little or nothing is mentioned about any specific policy or programme to enhance fathers' engagement. For example, in paragraph 4 of 2.1.3, page 29 on food and nutritional support for pregnant women and children, the GSA (2015), is silent on the kind of programme for fathers, that is, it does not offer any responsibility that can empower the father. In addition, paragraph 1 of page 31, which raised the issue on the prevention of family violence, Act NO.133 of 1993 criminalised rape within marriage; if found guilty, a father can be jailed or invariably a protection order can be issued against the father. This is a welcome development to prevent the abuse of the children's mother on whom the bulk of the responsibility of caring depends. The National Integrated ECD policy (Government of South Africa, 2015) is silent on measures of getting such a father involved in the lives of his children without giving excuses for his conduct (GSA, 2015).

South Africa's focus has shifted from 'ECD' to 'ECCE' because of the extension years of age the ECCE programmes cover. Hence, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) compulsory education range is 7-15 years (UNESCO (IBE), 2006). In other words, South Africa is now guided by this compulsory education age range. As a result of easy adoption of ECCE, the admission criteria now make it mandatory for a child turning 7 years old to be in Grade 1 (DBE, 2001; RSA Education Laws Amendment Act, 2002). In 2004, the Office of the President declared 'ECD' a national

priority, putting in place directives that municipalities include ECD planning in their Integrated Development Plans. Since then, and especially after the publication of the National Integrated Plan for ECD in South Africa (2005) and the passing of children's Amendment Act (2007), ECD has become a national priority. However, due to the fragmented nature of funding and service provision for ECD programmes in South Africa, many children became victims of the inappropriate service provision (UNESCO)(IBE) (2006); DoSD & UNICEF (2010); Atmore, Niekerk, & Ashley-Cooper (2012).

1.10.2. Importance of Father Engagement in the Education of their Children.

Fathers' engagement in children's education is a predominant factor for future academic success and children's complete total development (Pleck, 2010; Okeke, 2014). More research reveals that there is a positive relationship between fathers' engagement and children's physical, mental, emotional, and social development (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015). There is a positive improvement in children's behaviour (Pleck, 2010; Okeke, 2014). DoSD (2015), Guolaug (2010), Lumpkin (2010), Emerson et al. (2012), Jorosi-Tshiamo, Mogobe and Mokotdi (2013), Higgins and Morley (2014), in their studies, all demonstrate less dropout rates of children as a result of fathers' engagement. High graduation rates, social positive influence, close relationship and high security of children as a result of fathers' engagement in early childhood education of the young one have also been identified (Change, 2015; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Hall *et al.*, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

1.10.3. Challenges Affecting Fathers' Engagement in Children Early Childhood Care and Education.

Despite the overwhelming interest of fathers' engagement in the early education of their children, as reported by literature (Mufutau, 2015; Clyde, 2016; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca *et al.*, 2016), fathers are still confronted with many challenges which hinder their effective engagement in the lives' of their children. Fathers face different challenges ranging from lack of time, language barriers, lack of confidence and fear of school (Claycomb, 2007; Desmond & Desmond, 2006; Sheng, 2012). In addition, fathers face challenges such as teachers' attitudes towards fathers, parent-teacher factors as well as migrant labour (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Mufutau and Okeke (2016) have also revealed that mothers' attitudes towards fathers still constitute a major barrier. Research demonstrates that fathers are confronted with many factors affecting their engagement in the development of children. These range from fathers' absence in the life of their children, as seen in Richter *et al.* (2012) report that South Africa has the high rate of fathers' absence in the world. Statistics South Africa (2011) has also confirmed that a third of South African children live in the households without the father. The aforementioned views are also reaffirmed by other scholars (Marcisz, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Okeke, Shumba, Rembe & Sotuku, 2015).

1.10.4. Fatherhood in South Africa.

Good promotion of fatherhood enhances effective engagement of fathers in the lives of their children. Fatherhood roles in the lives of children can have immeasurable positive influence on their development (Makusha, Richter & Bhana, 2012). The earlier a father recognizes and acknowledges that he needs to be involved in lives of his children, irrespective of the nature of the relationship that exists between him and the mother of the child, the stronger the bond between him and the child (Richter *et al.*, 2012). Statistics South Africa (2011) and Richter *et al.* (2012) note the high rates of fathers' absence in the lives of their children in South Africa. This has also been supported by recent studies conducted by Okeke (2014) and Khewu & Adu (2015) which point out that fathers' absence is most noticeable in the lives of their children in South Africa. Studies have shown that, when fathers do not engage in their children's lives, a greater consequence is bound to occur in children, which greatly affects their psychological development and leads to lower levels of academic performance (Change, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Significantly, studies have shown that fathers' involvement in the early childhood care and education of children results in greater academic improvement, achievement in children's educational outcomes, ability to cope with life's pressure and to continue with their education (Shears, Bubar & Hall, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Wilson, 2015).

1.10.5. Strategies to Overcome Challenges Affecting Fathers' Engagement in the Education of their Children.

To ensure effective engagement of fathers, good strategies must be developed. There must be effective communication between the school and fathers, home visiting programmes, teachers and parents' associations must be established and the recruitment of male workers in schools focusing on early childhood development should be encouraged (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). The "Indigenous Parent Factor" (IPF) has also been touted as being one of the successful strategies used in Australia to enhance the fathers' engagement; this involves getting indigenous parents to work as volunteers at school (Higgins & Morley, 2014).

1.10.6. Policy and Specific Programmes for Effective Engagement of Fathers in Some Countries.

There must be a cultural shift in all service provision to include fathers in all aspects of child's well-being. In this regard, some examples will be drawn from United Kingdom (Potter *et al.*, 2012); United States of America (Murti, 2012); New Zealand (CHILD FORUM, 2016); Australia (Higgins & Morley, 2014); Asia (Mishra, 2016); Africa (Robert & Nsamenang, 2014), and any others.

1.11 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The section covered an overview of the methodology used in this study. The discussion was structured around the research paradigm, research approach, research design, the location of study, population of study, sample size, sample procedures, instrumentation for data collection, validity and reliability of instrument, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures. Ethical considerations and requirements were also considered.

1.11.1. Research Paradigm

Bakkabulindi (2015, p. 21) refers to “research paradigm as a sort of ‘camp’, to which a researcher belongs in terms of assumptions, propositions, thinking and approach to research.” The study adopted the positivist/post-positivist paradigm which mostly involves a quantitative research approach. Positivist paradigm is referred to as one that is based on testing a theory, where the theory relates to variables, which are measured with numbers and analysed with statistical procedures (Bakkabulindi, 2015, p. 22). Creswell (2014) explains that the “post-positivist assumptions have represented the traditional form of research, and these assumptions hold true more for quantitative research than qualitative research. It is also called positivist/post-positivist research, empirical science, and post-positivism” (Creswell, 2014, p.36). It was, therefore, found suitable for this study because it uses the scientific method of natural science to study human activity using objective enquiry and attempts to investigate and validate the norm of behaviour in testing theories and hypotheses. It

is in line with this argument that this paradigm is found relevant by the researcher to adopt in finding out stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning. Positivism is, therefore, an approach in social science that attempts to employ the natural science model of research for the exploration of social occurrence and justifications of the social world (Denscombe, 2001). Creswell (2014) further argues that "post-positivists hold a deterministic philosophy in which causes (probably) determine the effects or outcomes. Thus, the problems studied by post-positivists reflect the need to identify and assess the causes that influence outcomes, such as found in experiments" (Creswell, 2014, p.36). As a result, the motivation for the researcher to choose the post-positivist paradigm is prompted by the desire to investigate the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning and to identify various needs to assist fathers on how best they can be engaged in their children's lives. More significantly, the researcher is interested in how the policy and practice will be put in place to get fathers to engage in their children's educational lives.

1.11.2 Research Approach

The quantitative research approach was adopted in line with the positivist/post-positivist paradigm. According to Flick (2015, p. 270), "a quantitative research method is aimed at covering the phenomena under study in their frequencies and distribution and thus working with large numbers in the data collection." "Quantitative research is a means of testing objective theories by examining the relationship

among variables. These variables can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures” (Creswell, 2014, p. 295). Therefore, the researcher here adopts a quantitative approach in order to study a large number of respondents aiming at obtaining information on the stakeholders’ views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood education of their children.

1.11.3 Research Design of the Study

The study adopted a survey research design of the correlational type. A survey research designs “provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). The reason for the choice of correlational type of survey research design is to be able to investigate the relationship among variables of the study, in addition to the descriptive aspect. Therefore, the design aims to achieve numerical data on stakeholders’ views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood education provisioning.

1.11.4. Location of the Study

The geographical location of this study was eight pre-schools and Grade R of foundation phase learning in one Education District in Eastern Cape. The geographical location of this study was limited to one Education District in Eastern Cape. The choice of the Eastern Cape Province was made based on the standard of education in the district. The reason for the choice of location is that the selection is

based on common characteristics and the geographical area in which they are located. Geographically, the pre-schools are in rural and urban areas of the district. Furthermore, and linked with describing the environment in which these pre-schools operate, the researcher needed to understand the context in which teachers and parents view the engagement of fathers in early childhood education of their children. The performance of learners in Foundation, Intermediate and High schools in the province is not only below expectation but also among the lowest compared to other provinces in South Africa (Spaull, 2013). Therefore, there is the need to research all factors that might be negatively influencing the education in this province and this study is one of such research studies.

The study was carried out in King William's Town Education District in order to have participants that, arguably, share more or less common aspects in terms of culture, values, beliefs and other characteristics and are bound by sharing a geographical area where they are located. The Education District chosen has rural, semi-urban as well as urban locations in its coverage area. This is to enable the study involve fathers with diverse socio-economic link.

1.11.5. Population of the Study

Population refers "to the large group to which a researcher wants to generalize the sample results, the complete set of cases" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 669). The population of this study comprises all principals and teachers, fathers and mothers in one education district in the Eastern Cape Province. Principals and

teachers were chosen because they work in an education setting where children are meant to be educated. Fathers and mothers are the parents of the children who are supposed to ensure fathers' engagement in the development of their children. Eastern Cape Province was chosen because literature revealed that fathers from this province are not engaged in the lives of their children's education and that there is little or no literature, at least, to the best knowledge of this researcher, about fathers' engagement in the education of their children in Eastern Cape.

1.11.6. Sample size

Lumadi (2015, p. 224) defines sample size as "the total number of items taken from the population under study, which is ultimately used in statistical measurements." The sample of stakeholders (teachers and principals) and parents (mothers and fathers) were drawn from the population of all stakeholders of Foundation Phase Schools in King William's Town Education District of Eastern Cape. As Flick (2015, p. 269) indicates, "...research studies mostly include selections (samples) from a population and the results are generalized from sample to populations." The sample for this study was collected based on the stratified sampling method. Therefore, it was guided by the sample of Boyd (2006 as cited by Lumadi, 2015, p. 228).

Table 1: The Required Sample Size

Population Size	Confidence = 95%				Confidence = 99%			
	Margin of Error				Margin of Error			
	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
20	19	20	20	20	19	20	20	20
30	28	29	29	30	29	29	30	30
50	44	47	48	50	47	48	49	50
75	63	69	72	74	67	71	73	75
100	80	89	94	99	87	93	96	99
150	108	126	137	148	122	135	142	149
200	132	160	177	196	154	174	186	198
250	152	190	215	244	182	211	229	246
300	169	217	251	291	207	246	270	295
400	196	265	318	384	250	309	348	391
500	217	306	377	475	285	365	421	485
600	234	340	432	565	315	416	490	579
700	248	370	481	653	341	462	554	672
800	260	396	526	739	363	503	615	763
1000	278	440	606	906	399	575	727	943
1200	291	474	674	1067	427	636	827	1119
1500	306	515	759	1297	460	712	959	1376
2000	322	563	869	1155	498	808	1141	1785
2500	333	597	952	1984	524	879	1288	21793

(Boyd, P. 2006)

1.11.7. Sampling Procedures

The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample of this study.

According to Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010), multi-stage sampling involves the adoption of different sampling techniques at different stages of sampling in a study.

The first stage in the context of this study was the selection of schools to be involved in the study and the stratified random sampling technique was used to select eight

schools across the four satellite jurisdictions in the whole district, that is, two schools were randomly selected from each satellite jurisdiction.

As has been indicated, stratified sampling was used in the study; stratified sampling means “sampling within sub groups of known size that are relatively homogeneous to yield more precise results than a simple random” (Bacon-Shone, 2015, p.17). It was chosen because it allowed the researcher to divide the entire target population into various strata (sub-groups) and then randomly select the final respondents proportionally from the different sub-groups (Lumadi, 2015, p. 235). The study, therefore, aims to ensure a fair representation of the findings.

The second stage was the selection of the principals and the teachers to be involved in the study. Total enumeration technique was used to select both the principal and the deputy from all the selected schools. At the end, 16 principals were involved in the study. A random sampling technique was used to select 12 teachers in each of the selected schools (96 teachers in all). This was achieved by selecting three teachers, each from class of 0-2years, 2-3years, 3-4 years and Grade R. This made it a total of 112 preschool and Grade R parts of Foundation Phase principal/teachers across schools in King William’s Town Education District.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select all the preschool (0-4years) and Grade R classes in the selected schools. The only criterion for this selection is that only parents of children in preschool and Grade R, which is the level of education before formal Grade 1, are the focus stakeholders in the study. The purposive

sampling technique was used to select 18 mothers and 18 fathers of children in the selected classes. The criteria that were used here are:

- i. The parent must be ready to be involved in the study.
- ii. The parents must be able to read and respond to questions without any second hand information from another person.
- iii. The parent must have at least a child in preschool or Grade R in the school.

At the end, 144 mothers and 144 fathers of children in preschool and Grade R participated in the study, this amounts to 288 parents.

In each school sample, the participants were grouped in to two (2) principals (a total of 16 in all schools), twelve (12) teachers (a total of 96 in all schools), and eighteen (18) mothers (a total of 144 in all schools), eighteen (18) fathers (a total of 144 in all schools), making the sample to be a total of 400 stakeholders (14 principals/teachers, 18 fathers and 18 mothers) in each selected schools in Eastern Cape.

In total, the sample of this study comprises 16 principals, 96 preschool teachers (112 preschool principal/teachers) and 288 parents of children in preschool and Grade R in the King William's Town Education District in the Eastern Cape Province.

1.11.8. Instruments for Data Collection

Two self-designed questionnaires were used in this study. A questionnaire is defined as a list of questions presented to every participant in a study in an identified way, either written or orally (Flick, 2015, p. 270). The use of the questionnaire is preferred because it makes data compilation simple, and it is also easy to analyse with the use

of computer software package (Muijs, 2011). Two types of questionnaires were designed: Principal and Teacher Views Questionnaire (PTVQ) and Father and Mother Views Questionnaire (FMVQ). The instruments PTVQ and FMVQ have the same sections C-E. The first part of each instrument seeks demographic information and the second part was based on rating scale that allows respondent to indicate the level of their opinion on an item. A rating scale of a modified 4-point Likert rating scale was used for the purpose of analysis with response options of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The demographic information was coded: Age = age in years. Also, the 4-point Likert rating scales were coded: SA=1, A= 2, D= 3, SD= 4, for negative items and the reverse – SA= 4, A= 3, D= 2, SD= 1, for positive items. The questionnaire was administered to teachers and parents containing (20) questionnaire items and open response spaces for additional comments. On average, fifty (50) questionnaires were administered to teachers and parents in each of the selected eight schools, and the total numbers of questionnaires distributed were four-hundred (400).

1.11.9 Instrument Validity and Reliability.

Validity refers to whether one can draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores on particular instruments (Creswell, 2014, p. 297). It is important because it allowed the researcher to adequately focus on important information regarding responses from the respondents. Validity refers “whether a given instrument is correctly measuring the variables that it is intended to measure” (Bakkabulindi, 2015, p. 31).

The instrument was given to an expert in the Faculty of Education in University of Fort Hare to ensure the content validity of the instrument. Reliability refers to “whether scores to items on an instrument are internally consistent (i.e., are the item responses consistent across constructs?), stable over time (test-retest correlations), and whether there was consistency in test administration and scoring” (Creswell, 2014, p. 295). Flick (2015, p. 270) refers reliability to “a standard criterion in standardized/quantitative research which is based on repeated application of a test to assess whether the results are the same in both cases.” To ensure reliability, the instruments were field-tested. To ensure instrument reliability, the researcher used the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. Statistically, the acceptable coefficient when using Cronbach’s alpha is .70 (Delport & De Vos, 2005). The reliability of the instrument was obtained at a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, of 0.94 and 0.96. The instrument was deemed reliable since the obtained alpha coefficients were 0.94 and 0.96 above the acceptable .70 (Delport & De Vos, 2005).

1.12.1 Field-testing of Instruments

Field testing of instrument is a process of administering the designed research instruments in order to test its feasibility and reliability (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, 20 copies each of the validated instruments were produced and administered to teachers and parents outside the sample of this study. Two schools were selected for this purpose and a Cronbach alpha technique was used to test the reliability of the

instruments and the coefficients obtained were 0.94 and 0.96 for PTVQ and FMVQ questionnaire, respectively.

1.12.2. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is a technique for physically obtaining data to be analysed in a research study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 225). The researcher personally administered the questionnaires in all cases. A questionnaire instrument purposely designed for teachers (teacher/principal) was given to them to respond. Another questionnaire purposely designed for parents (mother and father) was also given to parents via the class teachers of each learner, enveloped and addressed to the parents for safe delivery. The researcher met with the School governing body (SGB) during parents' meeting to discuss the nature of the research and explained the questionnaire to them in details. The researcher also requested them to quickly return the questionnaire, within two weeks for collection. The researcher went back after two weeks to collect the questionnaire from the teachers and that of the parents through the class teachers of each learner.

1.12.3. Data Analysis Procedure

Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. With descriptive statistics, frequency tables were used to present nominal variables. The data were represented graphically using bar charts or pie chart. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and inferential statistics of

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, Analysis of Variance and t-test were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

1.12.4. Ethical Considerations and Requirements

Educational research mainly focuses on human beings. Consequently, the researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the participants, which involves issues such as physical and mental discomfort as well as harm and danger. As Oliver (2008) points out in his overview of ethics in research, ethical issues arise before, during and after the actual research activity within a project. Ethical clearance was obtained through FREC and UREC, University of Fort Hare, as well as a permission letter from DBE to conduct the study in the schools. The researcher endeavoured to act within the ethical principles and rules during the study. During the study, the following were, therefore, observed: gaining entry or permission, participants' rights, informed consent, confidentiality, protection from harm, achieving anonymity and maintaining professionalism

1.12.5. Gaining Entry

The researcher requested for a recognition letter from the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare. This was taken to the King William's Town District where the schools chosen for this study are situated, for a written permission. The researcher also wrote letters to The School Governing Body (SGB), Principals and Teachers, as well as Parents, asking permission to conduct the study.

1.12.6. Participants' Right

Participation in the study was voluntary. Voluntary participation means that participants cannot be compelled, coerced or required to participate. No one should be forced to participate in a research. In this study, therefore, respondents were allowed to exercise their right to be part of the research and the right to withdraw from the research at any time and for any (or no) reason. Therefore, the participants could make a voluntary decision about whether or not to participate in the study.

1.12.7. Informed Consent

Informed consent was achieved by providing participants with an explanation of the research, an opportunity to terminate their participation at any time with no penalty, purpose of the research, description of procedures and length of time needed, full disclosure of any risks associated with the study and description of benefits from the research. Consent forms with sufficient information, comprehension and choice to volunteer was given to participants to sign.

1.12.8. Confidentiality

Confidentiality was ensured by making certain that the data cannot be linked to individual participants by name; also, the information given cannot be publicly disclosed. To ensure confidentiality, information collected from the participants was assessed by the researcher only, and no outsider would have access to the participant's responses. Study codes were used on the data documents for easy

accessibility by the researcher only. After some months or a year, the questionnaires containing the responses will be properly disposed and destroyed.

1.12.9 Protection from Harm

To ensure protection, the relationship between the researcher and the participants was based on honesty, trust and respect of their rights. There was no pressure to participate and ample time was given to them for the decision to participate, hence the researcher made sure questions that were asked from the respondent did not expose them to any harm. This made them to freely respond to the questionnaire.

1.12.10 Achieving Anonymity

To ensure anonymity, any information collected from the research cannot be linked to participants' identities, or be divulged to any other person in any form, except where specific consent has been obtained. Therefore, no names or addresses were collected from the participants, hence pseudonyms were used.

1.12.11 Maintaining Professionalism

This study met the requirements for research with human subjects and ensured that ethical and legal guidelines set by the National government were followed. Since every researcher has an obligation to conduct his/her study in a manner that is consistent with professional guidelines, the researcher was also obliged to conduct this study in the same manner.

1.13 Outline of Chapters

Chapter One-: Introduction

Chapter Two –: Literature Review

Chapter Three –: Research Methodology

Chapter Four –: Presentation and Analysis of Data

Chapter Five –: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section presents the review of literature in respect of the engagement of fathers in early childhood education provisioning and implications for policy and practice. The chapter is sub-divided into the following sub-sections: the theoretical framework underpinning this study, review of empirical studies on early childhood education and fathers' engagement and summary.

2.1 Theoretical framework – Ecological System Theory

With regards to the ecological system theory, Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that, in order to understand human development, one must consider the entire ecological system in which growth occurs (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The theory looks at a child's development within the context of the system of relationships that form a child's environment. According to Bronfenbrenner, the theory defines complex 'layers' of environment, each having an effect on a child's development. He defines 'development' as the progressive change towards identified goals and ends (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The "bio-ecological system theory" calls attention to the notion that a child's own biology is a primary environment stimulating his or her development. The interaction between components in the children growing up,

his/her immediate family/community, environment and the societal background all serve to nourish and guide his/her development. Changes or mismatch in any one layer will flow throughout other layers. To study a child's development, then, one must glance not only at the child and his/her immediate environment, but also at the relations of the larger environment.

If the child does not have the steady joint interaction with significant adults that is essential for development, such a child will not have the tools to discover the other parts of his/her environment. Children need a cordial relationship that should be present in the child-parent relationship, or child to other important adult relationships. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bio-ecological system theory believes that the main relationship needs to be with someone who can offer a sense of caring that is meant to last a life time. This relationship must be promoted by a person or people within the immediate sphere of the child's influence. School and teachers should work to support the major relationship and create an environment that welcomes and promotes families (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). The society should agitate for a policy that supports the importance of parent's roles in particular reference to fathers in their children development.

According to Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998, p. 996), "Child development takes place through processes of progressively more complex interaction between an active child and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate environment. To be effective the interaction must occur on fairly regular basis over extended period of

time.” Bronfenbrenner describes development as the constant, gradually more multipart interaction with, and activity in the immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). He argues that the ecological environment is distinctive to each individual’s situation, and is seen as a series of nested and interconnected structures. The innermost structure is the personality. He proposes that a person acquires developmentally instigative or personal attributes or characteristics that request or hinder engagement in sustained, progressively more difficult interaction with and activity in the immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, p. 97).

The bio-ecological model is both bi-directional and interactions between the five systems, micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chrono-systems which are powerful in nature. Though there might be complexity between the interactions with each having an effect on a child’s development, this encourages researcher to better utilize factors that impact on children’s educational lives and their well-being. It represents a foundation for an idea about incorporated services models and in general early childhood care and education. The ecological environment is a “set of nested structures each inside the next like a set of Russian dolls” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3). A child’s development is a process which involves a reciprocal relationship between the child and his/her environment.

The Micro-system: The micro-system is the innermost level, the one that is closest to the child; that the child is in direct contact with, the family (father and mother), day care, school, play mates, and neighbourhood operate within the micro-system, where

in the proximal process exist (Mncanca *et al.*, 2016). The micro-system lays the foundation of great influence on the child. The relationships at this level can be bi-directional (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), since the child's parents can influence the behaviour of the child and vice-a-vice.

Meso-system: This involves the relationships between the micro-systems in child's life (relationship between home and school, school and work place). This means that the family experience may be related to child's school experience. For example: If a child is neglected by parents, such a child may have a low chance of developing a positive attitude towards teachers and peers. Also, this child may feel bad in the presence of others and this may lead to withdrawal from a group of peers. Significantly, parents (particularly the fathers) and teachers' involvement in the child's education, if pleasant, will result in meso-system functioning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

The Exo-system: The exo-system is the setting in which there is a link between the context where the child does not have any active role, but in which events exist that indirectly influence the process within the immediate setting in which the child's lives. For example: if a child is more attached to his/her father than his/her mother. If the father goes abroad to work for a few years, such a father may lose interaction with the child, this event may result in a strong bond between the mother and the child. However, the policies and decisions that are made at a wider level can also indirectly affect the child. For example, if a parent cannot get enough time to attend parent-

teacher meetings, communication barriers may occur between the school and parent, which may also have a negative impact on the child.

The Macro-system: The macro-system is the actual culture of an individual; it refers to institutions that have an indirect effect on the child (e.g. school policies, ethnic practices). The macro-systems contain the attitudes, ideologies, values, law and customs of a particular culture or sub-culture. Each component interacts with others, resulting in a highly complex the child developed. For example: the high rate of divorce which results in a proliferation of single parents may adversely affect the lives of children.

The Chrono-system: This involves the transitions and shifts in one's life span; it refers to institutions that have an indirect effect on the child as a result of changes within the timing of an event (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This may be social historical contexts that may influence an individual. The example is how divorce, may affect not only the couples' relationship but also their children's behaviour, and may negatively have been affected by this development.

Underlying Bronfenbrenner's theory is the assumption that development takes place when there is person-environment interaction. Proximal processes comprise the essence of the model and have been absolutely described as referring to "particular forms of interaction between person and environment that function over time and are desired as the primary device producing human development" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 994). These proximal processes need to involve gradually more

difficult corresponding relationships and interactions between an active individual in particular reference to functional father and the child, objects and symbols in his/her immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). For the interaction to be successful, they must occur on a constant basis and over long lasting periods of time so as to become more complex.

The positive interaction of the father in the child's lives had been influenced by Mncanca and Okeke (2016). Both argue that fathering values and practices are based on what they inherited from their generation, which greatly influence the next generation. Therefore, the way in which father interact with the children has significant roles to play in the IQ of the child. Simply put, proximal processes are surmised to lead to particular kinds of developmental outcomes as well as have the ability for realizing genetic capability for convincing functioning. For example, the ending patterns of proximal processes can be found in parent-child and peer-peer activities, group or solitary play, reading and learning new skills. However, an opinion from a bioecological outlook, proximal processes on its own cannot produce powerful developmental functioning. They are guided by the positive interaction of the father in the child's lives (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

Individual characteristics are best explained in terms of children, parents, family members, close friends, teachers, church members and other micro-systems which bring certain bio-psychosocial characteristics that control proximal processes and their developmental outcomes. The bioecological model identifies three types of

individual characteristics as being influential in forming the trajectory of the future development through their ability to control the direction and power of proximal process. These are: Demand characteristics, Resource characteristics, and Force characteristics (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016).

The demand characteristic is due to the proportion to excite or discourage behaviour from the social environment that either encourages or impedes psychological processes of growth (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016). The resource characteristics consist of bio-psychological assets and liabilities that control the power of the person to interact effectively in proximal processes. These include: the knowledge, skill and experience that can broaden the realm in which proximal process can function. In addition to these are housing, a caring family, food, health services, and education opportunities (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016). Force characteristics are forces which can stimulate proximal processes and survive their operation, or inversely inhibit, limit or even prevent their incident. Examples include: curiosity, temperament, motivation, persistence and responsiveness to initiative by others (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016).

Stewart and Pettipher (2016) explain that Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological system theory has many worthwhile applications in research. Firstly, the theory helps in envisaging research, significantly in identifying what developmental outcomes might be focused and, thus, measured. Secondly, the theory helps in acknowledging and identifying the multi-system factors controlling development. Thirdly, the theory helps in identifying and stimulating specific processes, especially at the face-to-face level,

that are likely to contribute to the hindering of educational development. Fourth, the theory will be seen to be a simplistic foundation for comprehending the multi-system factors controlling development (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016).

The bioecological theory throws more light on the intricacy of the interaction and interdependence of multiple systems that have an impact on children, their development and learning. In order to have a clear knowledge of the systems, the relationship between the various parts of the system needs to be studied. This means that an action, or change on one level cannot be seen as the cause for an action on another (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016). Necessarily, one can only figure out why things are as they are at any stage by comprehending the incessant active interaction and interplay between these multiple influences. On a practical level, this suggests that, when children, fathers, or schools as some system experience difficulties, a true ecological system scholar never argues whether the cause or the solution is positioned in a single system, but ponders the interrelationship between all the systems. Each system, therefore, owns analytical contributing factors and not causes from this angle, while one works with individuals such as fathers, teachers, or children, one never loses vision of the complete system in which the individual functions. Efforts are directed at striking the system as a whole (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016).

In this current study, father will be considered as the developing person of interest simply because of fathers' engagement and quality of fathers' interactions with their

children will be the outcomes to be considered. Thus, the father element will be assessed through stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood education provisioning. Also, the child's educational life as a person characteristic of an individual (child) with whom the developing person of interest (father) is interacting. Therefore, the quality of father-child engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning will be a reasonable representation of proximal process.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory is a model that takes individual and environmental factors into consideration and is also useful because of its ability to suggest a complete approach to study multi-level and interactive influences of child development. Most importantly, the model fits in a wide range of factors, multiple pathways by which they interact, and a multiple approach. The model has the prospective, particularly, to address issues of social economic inequality which can be at the centre of programmes and policies targeting children at the community level (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

In a recent study by Mncanca and Okeke (2016) on positive fatherhood, fatherhood identity and practices were conceptualized and theorized using the ecological model as a powerful tool to explain how the social-economic and the socio-cultural context influenced fatherhood practices, as well the awareness revealing the identities of fatherhood among the observed. The study also revealed how micro-macro-systems

will continue to play vital roles in the interaction of father-child engagement in children's educational lives.

The study is also corroborated by Mncanca, Okeke and Fletcher (2016). In this study, fathers' participation was conceptualized in terms of proximal processes taking place between fathers and children (bio-psychological human organism) and between home and school (micro-systems). In explaining fathers' participation, it was stated that "the micro-system is a massive area comprising a large gamut of other elements" (Mncanca, Okeke & Fletcher, 2016, p. 4). Furthermore, this study explained that, based on the Bronfenbrenner (1979) theory, the quality and nature of the interaction depends mostly on the content and structure of the micro-system. Hence the evolving human organism is the child, the person is the parent (specifically the father) and the immediate environment is the school.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bio-ecological system theory informed the current study in establishing the importance of multi-level environments and interactions among the micro, meso and macro- systems as key to child development. Therefore, teachers and parents (particularly the fathers) best account for educational differences in children's developmental outcomes (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Similarly, the model provides a powerful tool for understanding the influences of these structures upon a child's life and how it influences other parts of their development. It also helps understanding how broad aspects of teachers and parents, particularly the fathers, and also how the policy helps to influence child development regarding the

challenges facing fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning of their children (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

Building upon Bronfenbrenner's ideas, what is vital to identifying the provider to success is an appreciation of the person's active engagement in the children's early years' education and the interactions that take place in his/her environment (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016). If ECCE has an impact on the children as they progress through the education system, stakeholders are in the position to assist the fathers to be active in the lives of their children. Stewart and Pettipher (2016) explain further that children's success and the active engagement of fathers will increase through identifying the "risk factors" and minimizing them and identifying "protective factors" and optimizing them. Risk factors are the processes in children's environment (for example, poor classroom instruction, poor school environment, society influences) that contribute to a negative path of fathers' engagement in the early childhood education of their children. Protective factors are processes in children's environment (for example, a committed family member, particularly the father, neighbourhood, teachers, good policies) that contribute to positive outcomes in the lives of the children. A qualitative measure of the combined effects of the risk factors and protective factors is often referred to as "resiliency" (Stewart & Pettipher, 2016).

Base on the submission of Stewart and Pettipher (2016). The current study aims at increasing protective factors. For example, by equipping fathers on adequate information on how best they can be engaged in their children's lives, while

recognizing children as active systems interacting with at least three other interacting active systems, their immediate environment (for example, teacher, family in particular reference to fathers), the community and society as a whole (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Bronfenbrenner's theory also has an implication for the practice of teaching, having the knowledge of the collapse going on within children's homes. It is possible for the educational system to make up for the shortage. School and teachers must provide stable, long-term relationships between school and home. Bronfenbrenner (2005) believes that the primary relationship needs to be with someone who can provide a sense of loving that is meant to be permanent. This relationship must be promoted by a person or people within the immediate area of the child's power (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

Schools and teachers discharge an essential secondary role, but cannot provide the complexity of interaction that can be provided by the primary adults in particular reference to fathers. Schools and teachers should work hand in hand to support the primary relationship and to create an environment that receives and cares for families, particularly the fathers. This can be seen as consistent with Bronfenbrenner's idea of the creation of public policy that eases the work/family conflict (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

In a recent study of positive fatherhood, it was reported that not much difference has changed in the labour and living patterns of post-apartheid system in South Africa (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). One major reason for this is the failure of the labour law

to cater for easy transfer of family working class to live together as a family so as to avoid work/family conflict. This simply means that the work place still has an effect on the quality of the relationships of father with his children (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). It will have great value for the society to support political and economic policies that enhance the importance of parents, in particular reference to father's roles in their children development. Stakeholders should promote societal attitudes that value the work done on behalf of children at all levels, parents (in reference to fathers), teachers, extended family, caregivers and policy makers must rise up for the promotion of good educational lives of children (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). There is a need to assist teachers, schools, fathers, policy makers in being responsive to the identified needs of the children. Based on any of the identifying needs, the researcher will attempt to formulate his research response upon the theoretical foundations of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological system theory. Also, it will evaluate the ability of Bronfenbrenner's theory based upon the outcomes.

2.2 Fatherhood in South Africa in the Context of ECCE

Major studies across the world which follow families over time have found fathers' involvement with their children linked with their higher educational achievement and higher educational mobility relatively to their engagement (Pleck, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca *et al.*, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). Ironically, in South Africa, father absence in the lives

of their children is mostly noticeable, especially among the Black fathers (Khewu & Adu, 2015). In addition, South Africa has the highest rate of fathers' absence in the world (Richter *et al*, 2012). Statistics South Africa (2013) also reports that the majority of the children in the country are not living with their biological fathers.

Children of involved fathers are more likely to live in cognitively stimulated homes (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016) and fathers' commitment to the education process also matters. Several available studies (Khewu & Adu, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Clyde, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016) have shown high level of interest by the father in his child's schooling and education, his high expectations for children achievement and his greater direct involvement in their learning, education and schools are associated with children's better examination/test/class results, higher level of educational attainment, greater progress at school, better attitude towards school and higher educational expectations (Khewu & Adu, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Clyde, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

Good fatherhood roles are still not at their best in South Africa, more especially the young fathers who became parents while at school (Clyde, 2016). Previously, Mufutau (2015) also noted that these young fathers are incapable of being actively involved in the lives of their children. This is also corroborated by recent studies (Clyde, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). Nonetheless, fatherhood in South Africa is regarded as the act of being a father who is socially and physically connected to the children and takes active roles in the lives of the children; he might not necessarily be

a biological father (Richer & Morrell, 2006). Mufutau (2015) emphasizes on the need to adequately and effectively fulfil the roles of formidable fatherhood in the lives of the children. Hence, the complete development of children need effective engagement of fathers in adequately fulfils their roles. Fatherhood roles are still not well practised in ECCE and this may be as a result of traditional roles of fathers in the society or how society perceives a father to be in nature (Wardle, 2008). Evidence from research work also indicates a high level of fathers' absence in the lives of their children in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2011; Richter *et al.*, 2012). Fathers' absence in their children's lives could have devastating effects on the children. For instance, factors such as emotional imbalance, behavioural disorder, lower IQ's rate, high increase in drop rate, and increase in absenteeism and low esteem are some of the negative consequences that may occur in the lives of children when fathers are not able to participate in their early education (Fitzpatrick, 2011). Studies have shown that when fathers do not engage in their children's lives, a greater consequence is bound to occur in children, which greatly affects their psychological development and leads to lower levels of academic performance (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). For this reason, the importance of father's engagement has been explored by various researchers (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hopkins, 2013; Bhise & Sonawat, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Khewu & Adu, 2015). In addition, scholarly works reveal numerous challenges facing fathers' engagement in the early education of their children (Hornby & Lafaele,

2011; Potter *et al.*, 2012; Richter *et al.*, 2012; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

2.2.1 Levels/Trend of Fathers' Involvement in ECCE

The willingness and enthusiasm to be involved in their children's education are demonstrated by fathers of today (Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). Marsiglio and Roy (2012), Clyde (2016) as well as Mufutau and Okeke (2016) all reveal that a new trend or fatherhood emerged: fathers that shown to be responsible and caring, supporting children and looking after their welfare. The study (Marsiglio and Roy (2012), Clyde (2016) as well as Mufutau and Okeke (2016) established the roles of the 'new fathers' in the lives of their children. But the willingness is still hindered by many factors such as mothers' negative attitude (Mufutau, 2015), poor social economic factors, lack of education, unemployment (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016), which limit the fathers' level of involvement, while similar data gathered in South Africa surprisingly revealed that fathers' absence in the lives of their children is significant (Okeke, 2014; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). In addition, one-third of South African children are not living with their biological fathers (Statistic SA, 2011, Statistic SA, 2013). Factors associated with fathers' absenteeism from various studies about their inability to participate in their children's lives include the relationship with the mothers of the children (Mufutau, 2015; Mufutau and Okeke, 2016), work status of the family (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016), labour law (Mncanca & Okeke,

2016), post-apartheid emancipation (Khewu & Adu, 2015), and socio-economic status (Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

The widespread failure of fathers to engage with their children's educational lives may be contributing to school failure, which also affects the future of the child and the society as a whole (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Regrettably, Grange (2013) reports that 36% of South African children are residing with their fathers, meaning that the majority of the children do not have access to fatherly figures in their lives. Therefore, fatherhood responsibilities are not enjoyed by the majority of the children in South Africa. This work by Grange (2013) established earlier studies by Richter *et al.* (2011); Posel and Dewey (2006) both agreed that the majority of the Black African children are not living with their fathers. As a result the physical and social connections of father be it a biological and non-biological/step-fathers is denied by the children.

In addition, Mufutau and Okeke (2016), in their study of factors affecting rural men's participation in their children's educational lives, also reiterate that the millennium fathers are showing interest and awareness about the importance of their engagement in the lives of their children and they are willing to be engaged, if they are given the chance by the mothers of their children, as most mothers still constitute major barriers for their engagement.

However, another major cause of fathers' absence in the lives of children for a responsible good fatherhood has been identified to be the lack of a fatherly figure in

the lives of the children (Swart & Bhana, 2009; Makusha *et al.*, 2013). Not only that, fathers denial of the pregnancy of the child (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016), failure to accept the pregnancy by the young father (Swartz *et al.*, 2013), lack of good relationship between the father and the child's mother (Swartz *et al.*, 2013; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016), work related factors (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016), father in search of job at other parts of the country (Richter *et al.*, 2011), educational incompetency of the fathers (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016), ineffective communication with fathers (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016), negative teachers' attitude towards the father (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

Consequently, Hosegood and Madhavan (2012), in their study of social and residential arrangement of fathers and children, revealed that the majority of black African fathers do not reside with their children. This finding could have negative effects on the lives of children, particularly in early childhood care and education in the case of the young ones. Significantly, Khewu and Adu (2015) noted that fatherhood absence is not a current phenomenon or practice in South Africa. The history of fatherhood absence could be traced back to the apartheid era when there were chaotic situations, which led to many fathers being taken away from their homes and this led to their absence in the lives of their children. Recent studies (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016) also supported the argument that the migrant labour law and work status of the family serve as threats to the effective engagement of fathers in the lives of their children. As a result, fathers were

separated from their families for a long period of time in search of new jobs, which could lead to inactive engagement in the lives of the children.

Khewu and Adu (2015), Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) noted that lack of financial capacity also prevented fathers from active involvement in the lives of their children. As a result, such a father may not have an access to the child which prevents him from active involvement in the lives of such a child. Invariably, literature shows that one-third of children in South Africa reside with both parents and a quarter live with neither of their parents (DOSD, 2011; Holborn & Eddy, 2011). These submissions still emphasised that the majority of the children are not living with fatherly figures in their house. As a result, when the issue of fatherhood roles in the lives of children are to be explained, the children are at a great disadvantage.

Additionally, DOSD (2011) argues that the painful aspect of good family living is the issue of absent fathers in the lives of their children, unwanted pregnancies, alongside HIV/AIDS, high level of poverty. All these barriers can be attributed to the high level of fathers' absence in the lives of the children in a family setting. However, the absence of fathers signals the increasing numbers of single mothers and is known to have a number of causes. Notably, among them, is that large numbers of fathers are confronted with premature deaths compared to mothers (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). In a case of where the father of the children is alive, unemployment, poverty, gender power, effects of intimate partner violence, masculinity ideologies and migration play significant roles in fathers' absence in the lives of children (Holborn & Eddy, 2011). In

addition, the adoption of a western nuclear family, which has not been the practice of African society, has also contributed to absent fathers in the lives of their children (Ratele, 2012). Notwithstanding, the increase of single mothers and lack of fatherly figure residing with their children revealed the image of poor fatherhood, particularly the black fathers, as either not fulfilling their expected roles as fathers or not showing any interest in engaging in the lives of their children (Ratele, 2012; Khewu and Adu, 2015, Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

Significantly, several studies indicate the over powering positive influences of fathers in the lives of children, which result in high level of academic performance, improvement in intelligence quotient (IQ), less dropout rate, improvement in attendance rate, good interpersonal relationship with peers, moral value, high completion rates and the ability to continue in learning (Sheers, Bubar & Hall, 2011; Okeke, 2014, Khewu & Adu, 2015, Wilson, 2015, Mufutau & Okeke, 2016, Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). More importantly, children that grow up without the involvement of a father in their lives are more likely to experience poverty, perform poorly in school, showing behavioural problems, taking to drugs and lower attendance rate at school (Pleck, 2010; Bhishe & Sonawat, 2013; Change, 2015).

2.2.2 Fatherhood roles in their children's early childhood care and education

However, Ratele (2012) notes that while fatherhood is supposed to mean changing in accordance with time and place, there should not be any slight difference between the actual roles of mothers and fathers in the lives of their children. Fathers should

shift from their traditional roles of being a care-giver or masculine and assume the role of good nurturing and responsible fatherhood (Ratele, 2012). Ratele also noted that fatherhood roles are not peculiar alone to biological fathers, but also to social fathers who are able to play a significant role in the lives of the child and always for the child, taking full responsibilities in the lives of their child. In explaining fatherhood, Ratele (2012, p.6) defines fatherhood as 'a set of behaviours far beyond biological reproduction and thus can be fulfilled by other adult men in a boy's life'. As much as this definition is good, however, fatherhood goes beyond explaining the roles it fulfilled in the lives of boy-child alone while isolating the girl-child. Hence, the totality of good fatherhood encompasses the good nurturing of both the boys and the girls as children in the home.

Significantly, Ratele's (2012) study on South African fathers: a critical examination of men's constructions and experiences of fatherhood and fatherlessness can be summed up by looking at many issues relating to the legacy of apartheid, unemployment, poverty and inequality. South Africa's post-apartheid era may have negatively affected different families, resulting in children growing without the engagement of their fathers in their lives (Ratele, 2012). However, the study reveals that fathers do take active roles in the lives of children, irrespective of the condition of the father figure in the lives of the children. Hence, the study revealed the importance of acknowledging the positive role models of fathering.

Ratele, Shefer and Clowes (2012) also note the absence of fathers in the lives of their children, which has been a serious concern in South Africa and which poses a serious threat to the family life in the country and inhibits the effectiveness of the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education of their children, as well as an holistic development of the children in general. Ratele *et al.* (2012) put up an argument that fathers are perceived to be either absent or badly involved in the children's lives when the issue of good fatherhood and fatherlessness by groups of fathers in South Africa is to be discussed. The authors noted further that family life is under serious threat and generally believe that fathers are not playing their roles, as expected in the lives of their children.

Makusha, Richter and Bhana (2012) explain further that, in order to distinguish between biological fathers and social fatherhood, the onus lies on which among the two is able to perform the social role of fathering that will be referred to as fatherhood. In other words, it is not necessary to be a biological father before one can play the roles of fatherhood in a child or more children. Clyde (2016) also sheds more light on fatherhood as meaning a social role. The author submits that fathers have clear knowledge of their roles to be supportive, nurturing, to be providers and protectors who are always there for their children. In other words, whoever is going to play the role of fatherhood must be socially and physically connected to the children and must make the children happy. More importantly, fatherhood roles are known and performed in many ways, depending on the person that stands up to the

challenges of becoming responsible, socially and physically connected to children without the children being his offspring. Social connectivity will strengthen the bond between the father and children as well as the mother of the children (Makusha, Richter & Bhana, 2012; Clyde, 2016). Both authors are of the view that fathers play social roles because of the spirit of communalism, which the society expects them to play and, with this, they are happy playing their duties, whether as biological or non-biological fathers (Makusha *et al.*, 2012; Clyde, 2016).

Makusha, Richter, Knight, Van Rooyen and Bhana (2013) in their study on experiences of adult women and men with their own fathers or father-figures in rural Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa, considered how childhood experiences with fathers are connected with men's experiences and women's expectations of fathering. The authors argue further that fatherhood is continuous and is determined by socio-cultural and economic factors, societal expectations, father-mother relationship and personal characteristics of men. The study revealed that the childhood experiences of both father and mother help them and guide them to perform their roles as fathers and for mothers to shape their expectations of fathering to influence their children's fathers. Makusha *et al.* (2013) conclude that men want to live together with their families and be more active in the lives of their children. However, some men who have a poor socio-economic background may not be able to fulfil their roles as expected of them. In addition, women who have excellent relationships with their children's fathers, regardless of the marital status or living together, are in the best

position to influence father-child engagement in a positive direction when compared to women who experience unfavourable relationships with their children's fathers. Makusha *et al.* (2013) concluded that if adequate and necessary information and good fathering skills are provided, fathers will overcome any negative experiences they might have in their childhood with their father or negative father-mother relationship experience.

2.2.3 Traditional roles of fathers in African culture

The traditional roles of fathers in African culture are solely a financial/economic, food, shelter, and protector/security provider for the family; while social, nurturing, and caring is left for the mother to do. Mncanca and Okeke (2016), in the study of positive fatherhood, explain that in African traditional culture, the typical role of an African father is mainly a breadwinner. This means that this responsibility role of an African father is never shifted to the mother for him to gain respect and honour in the family. However, due to the experience of apartheid on the role of South African fathers of African origin, the roles seem to be greatly neglected (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca *et al.*, 2016).

2.2.4 Barriers to fatherhood in South Africa

Research indicates that South Africa is not grappling with fathers' absence in the lives of their children, but there are global issues which cripple the fatherly roles in the lives of children (Roy, 2008). The author reiterates that this is due to many factors

which limit their fatherhood roles, such as race, uncertainty in political economies, family instability, poor social economic class, migrant labour system, as well as desertion and divorce. This leads to a situation where children with single parents, particularly those living with their mother, do not perform better in academics and are likely not to progress academically, thereby becoming school dropouts (Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015; Mncanca *et al.*, 2016). The following are identified as barriers to effective fatherhood in South Africa.

a) Non-acknowledgement of self-responsibilities

Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) indicate that the refusal of paternity and the father never having been married with the mother are examples of some of the non-acknowledgement of self-responsibilities by fathers. These attitudes put the children at a disadvantage of not having a fatherly figure in their lives. This finding corroborates the earlier study by Richter & Morrell (2006), that the majority of South African fathers do not have the interests of their children at heart. Mncanca *et al.* (2016) point out that when a young father fails to show up when the child is born and does not care about being responsible for the upbringing of the child, thus leaving the child to the care of the mother, this leads to non-engagement of the father in the lives of the children. Significantly, a previous study by Morrell (2006) indicates that a good father is a person who does his utmost to secure life opportunities for his children. In contrast, a bad father is somebody who denies his obligations to his children and shows little heed for the responsibilities of fatherhood (Morrell, 2006).

b) Historical legacy of racial emasculation

Research shows that the fatherhood role could not be played by most fathers in South Africa because of the historical foundations of racial oppression by which African fathers were denied the rights of living peacefully with the mothers of their children due to factors such as poor social economic living, victimization of black fathers, leading to the responsibility to care for the house being left in the hands of the mothers (Okeke *et al.*, 2015; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). Black African fathers were isolated from their children in an attempt to get food for their families and only came home once a year. In addition, the jobs that these fathers were employed are not environmentally friendly, and this led to pain, hardship and violence among the fathers which result death among the fathers (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

In other words, the hardship that these fathers went through as fathers was so severe under the prevailing circumstances and this made them to become irresponsible to their families (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). Mncanca *et al.* (2016) also concur with the issue of racial emasculation and claim that history can never be forgotten by fathers who could not perform their fatherhood roles in their children's lives. However, Statistic South Africa (2013) indicates that one third of black children have a fatherly figure in their lives.

c) Lack of resources/poverty

Mabugu and Amusa (2015) indicate that many fathers cannot perform their fatherhood duties because of lack of resources; poverty was the major factor affecting the fathers, and, as a result, they were seen as irresponsible parents who failed to discharge their duties as fathers in South Africa. Moreover, studies indicate that fathers who are unable to perform their duties as expected of a good father are more likely to deny or avoid their fatherhood duties (Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). Finance and other resource are lacking in their lives, which seem to be a limitation or barrier that always prevents them from carrying out their roles as fathers (Clowes *et al.*, 2013).

d) Parental absence/Lack of income/poor payment

Mncanca and Okeke (2016), Mncanca *et al.* (2016) claim that the complexity of many factors such as poverty, lack of income, migrant labour, disabling housing policies, restrictions on the movement and resistance of people, compulsory male roles and survival strategies adopted by single mothers, contribute to fathers' absence from the family. This gives mothers no option but to be responsible for the caring and upbringing of their children, and all the above frustrations have led to fathers not being able to live up to expectations of fatherhood.

Studies show that many fathers are not visible in the caring for their children, and do not provide either material or social needs for their children, thereby losing

connection with the family (Richter *et al.*, 2010; Clowes *et al.*, 2013). However, Mncanca and Okeke (2016), in their study of positive fatherhood, reiterate that the participants give priority to education even though they were denied of such opportunities and are willing to remove such stigma in their children's lives. As a result, fathers show tremendous interest in the education and lives of their children (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

e) Lack of marital life

Studies reveal that some mother does not take the father of their children to be husband due to a series of abuse experience from such husband. This includes: sexual violence, alcohol abuse and other risk factors (Mthembu, Khan, Mabaso, & Simbayi, 2016). These mothers prefer to be single mothers and avoid the pressure of having a husband who is not carrying out the fatherhood role. This behaviour of the father has serious implications for the children, especially for the girls, who, as a result, develop lack of trust for a man and the marriage is not all that important in life. For the boys, the side effect of this is that they grow up without any guidance of a male figure in their lives (Astone, 2014; Mthembu *et al.*, 2016).

2.2.5 Fatherhood promotion

Richter (2006) reveals that there are tremendous changes in the roles of 21st century fathers as compared to the fathers from the past. To corroborate the views of Richter, Clyde (2016), in the study of fathers' involvement in social development of children,

agrees that the 21st century fathers are more active in their children's lives, and many of them still want to participate in the day-to-day upbringing of their children. The positive effects of the human sciences and research council fatherhood project photographic exhibition around South Africa has opened the eyes of fathers and has given them more knowledge in realizing the importance of being involved in their children's lives. Some of the fathers even regretted not being actively involved in their children's lives previously and promised to have a change in behaviour and be actively involved in the upbringing of their children (Richter, 2006).

Studies show that fatherhood in South Africa goes beyond having a child or living in the same residence with a child, but many fathers assume the roles of caring for the children irrespective of whether they are biological fathers or not to the child (Richter & Morrell, 2007). Richter and Morrell (2008) further mention that fathers need to be informed about different ways to cater for children, such as: hygiene recognition, disease prevention and treatment of child illness, nutrition and health services. The early years are a crucial time for father-child relationships. The earlier a father recognizes and acknowledges that he needs to be involved in lives of his children, irrespective of the mood of the relationship that exists between him and the mother of the child, the stronger the bond between him and the child (Richter *et al.*, 2012).

Previous research study by Roy (2008) corroborated by Marsiglio and Roy (2012), as well as Clyde (2016) mention that tremendous change has taken place between the fathers of the twenty first century and the emergence of the "new father" where there

is an increase in commitment with regards to their families and the well-being of their children. Richter *et al.* (2012) also submit that despite these odds, young fathers are willing to participate in the lives of their children as well as caring for the mothers or wives. In addition, good and viable communication, doing activities together, and good financial support will prove them to be good fathers in the lives of their children, thereby changing their characters in positive ways. More significantly, Mncanca and Okeke (2016) conclude that positive fatherhood is integral in the realisation of desire for functional early childhood care and education.

2.3.1 National integrated early childhood development policy (GSA, 2015)

The National integrated early childhood development policy (GSA, 2015) aims at ensuring quality, equitable, universal availability of early childhood development services. This includes, amongst others, to ensure adequate provision, and establish appropriate monitoring and quality assurance as well as improvement systems to secure the provision of quality early childhood development services for the early years of children in South Africa. The GSA (2015), emphasises on the realisation of the rights of children which solely depends on “the quality of the biological, social and economic environment in which foetus, infant, and young child develops, especially whilst in utero and in the first two years after birth, a period commonly referred to as the ‘first 1000 days’” (GSA, 2015, p. 16).

As can be evidenced from the above revelations, the roles of a fatherly figure can be deduced from this submission; the environment also plays a vital role in the overall

development of children. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) "bio-ecological system theory" calls attention to the fact that a child's own biology is a primary environment stimulating his or her development. The team work between components in the child's grown up, his or her immediate family/community, environment and the societal background nourishes and guides his/her community (Bronfrenner's, 1979).

In the application of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) "bio-ecological system theory" in the study of "Black father' participation in early childhood development." by Mncanca et al. (2016, p. 4) it is stated that "the micro-system is a massive area comprising a large gamut of other elements." In this regards, fathers' engagement was conceptualised in terms of proximal processes taking place between fathers and children (bio-psychological human organism) and between home and school (micro-system)". To support this argument, fathers must necessarily be present in the lives of their children to avoid any negative effects in the early childhood care and education of the young ones.

But the GSA (2015) is silent on the issues with regards to fathers, putting more emphasises on mothers. Therefore, recognizing fathers around parenting must be the primary role of all stakeholders, government, NGOs, communities in the optimal and holistic development of the young one. However, recommending or soliciting for fathers' importance or significance in policy formulation and programme implementation will no doubt have positive and great effects in children's behaviour and a high level of academic performance in later life. Numerous studies indicate that

when fathers are actively participating in the life of their children, such children improve in behaviour, excel in academic performance and have a positive attitude towards peers and others (Lamb, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

Therefore, the quality of biological, social and economic engagement of fathers in their lives will no doubt have positive and great effects on children and a high level of academic performance will be achieved in life. More importantly, the study indicates that a child who is not associated with his/her father can be denied by the extended families and not have the family name which brings dignity and respect to a child (Khewu & Adu, 2015). More significantly, Khewu and Adu (2015) explain further that a child who does not have his/ her father's identity might not be able to inherit his/her father's properties, and this undermines the security of the child. Therefore, policy formulation and programme implementation that emphasize the legality of fathers as distinctively important in child development will go a long way to make fathers take up challenges of nurturing roles rather than the fathering roles. In other words, children who have the involvement of both parents, who see themselves as both significant and special to the child, will benefit from the close attachment within those relationships.

In addition, there is need to highlight the strength and successful approaches to the ECCE policy and programme and to identify major challenges/obstacles and areas

where urgent action is needed in relation to the involvement of fathers in the life of their children. The GSA (2015) emphasizes that the ECCE policy must be strengthened on the following:

- Increasing prominence involvement and partnership with father and mother.
- Uninterrupted growth in access and provision of quality programme.
- Policy focus on improving ECCE governance.
- Acknowledgement of the significance of the work force.
- Focus on holistic curriculum.

Early childhood care and education policy not only targeted at securing the rights of the children but also that of their parents, who constitute the human capital and social capital of the family (Coleman, 1988) to ensure and maximize the holistic development of the children, hence any attempt to neglect fathers in the policy formulation and programme implementation will make the whole process incomplete. More importantly, as noted by GSA (2015), the foundation and initiatives of early childhood development is established on the realization that, for a nation to develop, the child human capital must be explored and maximized to its full potential. Coleman (1988) argues that social capital within the family that gives access to the adult human capital depends both on the physical presence of adults in the family and on the attention given by the adults to the child welfare.

GSA (2015) reports that 'The Buffalo City Declaration (March 2012)' acknowledged the ECD as a right and promise to improve the quality, develop a holistic approach

and well-coordinated ECD system. In lieu of this, fathers need to be included in any of the programmes and policy meant for the young one to strive for a complete development of ECCE in life. In accordance with the Buffalo City Declaration, the Cabinet on 18th September 2013 approved the plan and committed to full development of ECCE; among the commitments, were the capacity building initiatives necessary to support the implementation of the policy. However, to achieve capacity building, parents, especially fathers, need to be well capacitated and supported to enable them take active roles in the lives of their children.

Ironically, the GSA (2015) ECCE policy and programme focuses more on mothers, children, caregivers and little is mentioned about a specific policy and programme to enhance fathers' engagement. If fathers are not catered for in the policy, this may jeopardize their effective and active engagement in the lives of their children. For examples, paragraph 3 of 2.1.2 page 28 on health policy, totally neglects the fathers. The basic health care for pregnant women and young children were given priority, neglecting fathers. How would fathers perform their roles if their health is not given attention? In paragraph 4 of 2.1.3 page 29 on food and nutrition for pregnant women and children, fathers were not even addressed; meaning that, hungry fathers will not be able to effectively engage in the lives of their children.

In addition, paragraph 1 of page 31, Act No. 133 of 1993, which raised the issue on prevention of family violence, the Act criminalized rape within marriage, if found guilty, a father can be jailed or invariably a protection order can be issued against the

father (GSA, 2015). This is a welcome pronouncement for the family, since the mother and the children cannot be treated by a father who could not respect the mother of his children. The National Integrated ECD policy (Government of South Africa, 2015) is silent on measures of getting such a father involved in the lives of his children without giving excuses for his conduct (GSA, 2015).

However, paragraph 1 of page 30 of 2.1.4 of the social security policy identifies the poverty level faced by the young children, more especially the Black African children, who suffered from malnutrition and inadequate breastfeeding (DHIS). Invariably, the measure taken to alleviate this predicament somehow needs to be revisited. Hence, in paragraph 3 of 2.1.4 page 30, where “Cash Support Grant” is a means of solving this problem, it is only transferred to the caregiver alone, not even the parents, with particular reference to fathers. In other words, this R330 Cash Support Grants might not be used judiciously by the caregiver, though, this is a good programme.

In addition, effective communication with parents is a barrier in terms of paragraph 1, page 31 of the policy. Programmes, such as “Takalani Sesame and Nal’ibali”, which focus on communicating with children, but bear in mind that these children are too young to take decisions by themselves, they rely on their parents in their lives. However, programmes like “Ilifa labantwana” together with the South African Broadcasting Corporation introduced a talk-show for parents on effective involvement in children development; the effective functioning of this programme must be intensified and monitored. This will enable adequate engagement of fathers in the

lives of their children and bring close interpersonal cooperation of the family, especially where the fatherly role is mostly needed. In other words, the policy makers must look at this critically when policy is formulated.

Most significantly, the national policy vision on access to safe housing, affordable water sanitation and energy services, as written in page 33 of the policy, is highly commendable. This signifies the continuous increase in access and provision of essential package, but looking at the short-to-medium term goals from 2017-2024 (GSA, 2015, p. 94), the policy is silent on the kind of solid programme for the actualization of these goals. However, such a programme needs to be strictly adhered to and must have a direct or indirect positive influence on parents, particularly the fathers, since they are the role models in the family.

However, paragraph 2 of page 39 and 3.8, paragraph 1 of page 39 of the policy indicate that the current policies do not guarantee the rights of children, particularly the physically challenged children, because there is no provision to assist their fathers' need to revisit this young one, as contained in GSA (2015). This, coupled with no specific programmes for parenting support, is nothing to write home about. In other words, the policy needs to be looked into thoroughly and urgent attention needs to be paid to it in order to come out with a solution to address this problem.

Moreover, sub-section a-d of page 47-48 makes mention of home visiting and health-facility-based programme, which is designed to sensitize the pregnant mothers on the significance of early learning of their children from birth, seems to neglect the fathers.

However, fathers also have roles to play in the lives of their children's responsive care as well as language stimulation, as the optimal development of the child should not be peculiar to mothers alone.

In addition, paragraph 3 of page 62 GSA (2015) ECCE policy also highlights the community-based early learning play groups for mothers and children age 0-2 years. This will be more advantageous if fathers are included in the programme, since a father and a mother are referred to as parents, not only the mother. Even if the mother is a single mother, someone, somehow, will play a fatherly figure in the life of the child, hence such a fatherly figure needs to be recognized and included when planning for the future of the child.

In other words, there is an urgent need for a national survey to be conducted in order to examine the importance of early childhood development and active involvement of parents with particular reference to fathers in the early years of the child developmental process. However, Dawes & Biersteker (2012) point out that there is a significant opportunity to empower and involve the public in early childhood development. As part of the continuous increase in access and provision of essential package which need strengthening, paragraph 1-7 of page 62 of the policy is welcome and will have a positive impact on the children as well as the parents. However, the policy needs to state the measure by which feedback from children, parents and stake holders could be examined to ascertain the fulfilment and effective practices of these essential packages rather than just be on paper.

Invariably, the Education White Paper 5 (2001) points out that the government of the Republic of South Africa recognizes that ECCE does not fall specifically under any particular government establishment regarding the holistic development of the young children. However, this has led to numerous challenges confronting ECCE; among such are lack of leadership and co-ordination, non-functional institutional arrangements and resources, few experts, and lack of accountability. As a result of the aforementioned challenges, the policy must come up with specific and strong measures to tackle these challenges in order for the policy vision, goals and objectives to be met.

2.3.2 Policies and specific programmes: A global context

In the face of continuous low level, as well as lack of fathers' engagement in the lives of their children's early year education, most industrialized countries provide some specific policies and programmes aiming at fathers to actively and effectively engage in the lives of their children. The policies and programmes specifically target to promote the cognitive, verbal, literacy, and numeracy skills of young children to provide them with a fair start in early childhood to the adult lives.

Significantly, the policies and specific programmes for fathers' engagement in various countries also aim to develop the social and emotional competency of children in relation to their fathers. Moreover, the policies and systems of father specific programmes implemented in different countries differ greatly in coverage, intensity, quality, and probably have influence, as was reported by various research works

(Ball, 2010; Ball & Wahedi, 2010; Promundo, 2010; Richter *et al.*, 2011; Alsumati, 2012; Huerta *et al.*, 2013, Parker, 2014; Potter *et al.*, 2012; Murti, 2012; CHILD FORUM, 2016; Higgins & Morley, 2014; Mishra, 2012; Robert & Nsamenang, 2014).

Additionally, policies and specific programmes with the aim of targeting fathers are used in this research as a general term referring to several different models which can be care-oriented and instruction-oriented, and which comprises of home-based, centre-based, school-based, community-based approaches to improve children's lives through active and meaningful engagement of fathers. Generally, in all countries, the engagement of fathers is focused on instructions given by the fathers to their children in order for the children to develop physically, socially and morally.

Conveniently, therefore, policies and specific programmes are meant to encourage and improve the engagement of fathers in their children's educational lives, starting from early years to adulthood, aiming to improve cognitive, social, emotional development as well as motivating the young children in order to provide them with a good start in formal education. More importantly, a good start in life, specifically in foundation phase learning, in turn, increases the likelihood of favourable educational and social outcomes in life. Early childhood education and care (ECCE) has become a priority for policy and programming at national and global level, with increasing recognition of the interconnections between a nation's development goals and quality of services for all children and their families, with particular reference to fathers. The priority is to support practical steps towards quality, holistic ECCE services for young

children and families. Therefore, policy and programming must be sensitive to changing needs and priorities at different ages and stages, all embraced within the concept of ECCE.

Research indicates that when fathers are actively engaged in their children's lives, these children are more likely to perform better at school, have higher IQ's, improve relationships with peers, increase their attendance rates, have less emotional stress, and are able to continue in learning (Pleck, 2010; Lamb, 2010; Okeke, 2014; Mishra *et al.*, 2015, Mufutau, 2015, Mufutau & Okeke, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016; Noel *et al.*, 2015).

Examples of policies and specific-programmes will be taken from the following countries: United State of America, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, Dubai, Sweden, Brazil, Ireland and South Africa.

2.3.2.1 Policies and specific programmes in Ireland

To ensure quality services delivery in ECCE, the Irish government embarked on three distinct quality programmes. These programmes are, the Irish Preschool and Play groups Association, the National Children's Nurseries Association and the Border Counties Childcare Network, in terms of which each of these bodies has quality enhancement programmes specifically designed to targeted fathers in taking active roles in the lives of their children (O'Connor & Augus, 2012). Since the role of fathers

is very crucial in modelling children's image and the developmental process of their lives, such programmes could also be adopted in South Africa, specifically to target the positive engagement of fathers in the lives of their children.

The first policy to be established in Ireland was entitled "Ready to learn"; this policy aims at ensuring the quality of ECCE (O'Connor & Augus, 2012). This policy can still be adopted in South Africa, targeting the fathers in ensuring that they prepare their children for early learning at home. Hence, this is directly making them to be actively involved in their children's lives, ensuring that parents be the first teachers of children in life; more importantly, good fathering promotes a positive relationship with children and provision of children's social, cognitive, academic achievement and improved behaviour (Pleck, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Okeke, 2014).

In ensuring good quality of ECCE, a programme known as the 'National Childcare Investment Programme' (NCIP) was established where a full ministerial position (Minister for children and Youth Affairs) was established in 2011, to direct the affairs of ECCE (O'Connor & Augus, 2012). Such a programme and department could also be established by the government of South Africa in order to avoid the fragmented nature of the ECCE sector or services delivery in South Africa. Also the launch of 'CECDE's Sielta programme', a national quality framework of early childhood education and updating the child care regulations was pivotal (O'Connor & Augus, 2012).

According to Fagan (2012), 'Parent Child Home Programme' (PCHP) yielded positive results in preparing children for early childhood education through their parents. These early learning initiatives (ELI) are a programme designed to address educational disadvantage families and aiming at targeting the parent by making sure that children have the necessary skills to start school within the period of two years while at home with their parents. This programme is an oral interaction between the parents and the child.

Anecdotally, it is said that parents are the first teachers or educators in children's lives with particular reference to fathers, and when fathers are involved in the lives of their children, such children are more likely to succeed academically, become less engaged in illicit drugs, lower dropout rate, ability to continue in education (Childers, 2010; Chauke & Khunou, 2014). Additionally, this programme increases children's language and communication skills, pre-literacy as well as pre-numeracy competency, and ability to succeed academically (Fagan, 2012). More importantly, parents are able to develop interest in educational books and toys necessary to develop their children's cognitive skills in preparation of early learning (Fagan, 2012).

If such a programme is introduced to South Africa, aiming at targeting the father in taking active involvement in their children lives, the traditional beliefs of non-involvement of fathers in their children's lives in South Africa could be minimized, if

not completely eradicated. There are bodies of evidence to support the argument that fathers must have constant conversations with children, regarding their academic work, and social life, not only that, but also play games at home with children (Lamb, 2010; Okeke, 2014; Wilson, 2015).

2.3.2.2. Policies and specific programmes in the United State of America

Early Head Start programme was developed in USA to engage fathers in the early childhood education of their children in order to enhance the overwhelming development of the children and to support the family (Shears, Bubar & Hall, 2011). However, the authors note that the programme is specifically targeting the father to be engaged in their children's lives. Significantly, in the study conducted to find out the effectiveness of this programmes, it was concluded that the fathers are willing to get engaged in their children's lives and also aware of the importance of their engagement. The native fathers expressed their belief that this programme of Early Head Start assisted them in their roles as fathers of their children. Shears *et al.* (2011) maintain that the roles of fathers in the lives of their children is seen as that of a provider, protector, role model and teacher, as well as caregiver and that the father should partner with the mother and be a source of affection and emotional support.

As has been indicated, fathers must be physically, emotionally, and socially engaged in their children's lives which are associated with better academic performance for

children (Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). In addition, fathering roles in the lives of children are more than traditional roles, and include being available and actively engaged in the lives of their children, and, based on the evidence of the study conducted on native fathers in the USA, to ascertain the effectiveness of the Early Head Start programmes (Shears *et al.*, 2011). Huerta *et al.* (2013) shed more light on the USA specific programmes; the authors argue that in order to reduce the negative stereotype and create positive engagement as well as to encourage and facilitate the active engagement of fathers in the lives of their children, the policy of fathers' paternity leave was adopted. The adoption and implementation of this policy yielded positive engagement of fathers in the lives of their children. Not limited to that, it is linked to engagement in childcare activities like feeding the child, getting up at night to check the condition of the child while sleeping, and changing diapers. These roles are associated with high levels of cognitive development in children (Huerta *et al.*, 2013).

A previous study by Michael (2010) also reveals that the roles of a father in USA is seen as that of a primary bread winner, caregiver, provider, listener, comforter, teacher, disciplinarian, chauffeur, dishwasher and leaky faucet repairmen. To buttress these roles of fathers, the author further explains that these roles may start during pregnancy until the birth of the child. Lamb (2010) explains that positive roles of fathers have positive effects on children's healthy development and cognitive capabilities. Research reveals that when a father reads to his children, plays with them, nurtures them, teaches right from wrong, he will have a child with less

behavioural problems and higher cognitive capabilities (Lamb, 2010; Okeke, 2014; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

2.3.2.3 Policies and specific programmes in Australia

Head Start for Australia is a programme adopted by the government of Australia (Huerta *et al.*, 2013). Although the programme was originally initiated in USA and found to be of great benefit to families of low income earners who had taken active engagement in the early years of their children lives, the Australian government adopted the programme, aiming to inspire the disadvantaged families to be actively engaged in their children's lives (Elliot, 2006). The programme targets fathers and their children within the age of three years in poor communities.

The Abecedarian Project and Project Care: The programme is also a parent support programme complemented by home visits, this programme showed an improved in short-term and long-term outcomes for both children and their parents (Elliot, 2006). Similarly, the programmes can also be adopted in South Africa, specifically to target the fathers in showing interest in the holistic development of the young ones. The author highlights that the Project Care, which is just part of the programme, also yielded positive results in supporting parents, but with particular reference to fathers to take active part in their children lives, as a result, educational outcomes of children were greatly improved and children were able to continue learning at later stage of their lives.

Pleck (2010) is of the opinion that parental involvement must be qualitative and include positive interaction, warmth, responsiveness and control. Moreover, Huerta *et al.* (2013) explain that, in Australia, father's roles in the lives of their children are appreciated when a father takes paternity/parental leave of two or more weeks at first year of the child's development. In addition, the outcomes of the fathering and roles of the father also reveal that children with a supportive father in their lives show better cognitive outcomes and less behavioural problems, compared to children whose fathers did not get engaged in their lives (Huerta *et al.*, 2013).

2.3.2.4 Policies and specific programmes in Canada.

Research evidence reveals that the Caribbean Canadian fathers are engaged in the lives of their children by teaching, reinforcing a positive cultural identity as well guiding children's behaviour (Ball, 2010). In addition, fathering roles in the children's lives began when father attend post-natal education programme, usually 12¹/₂ hours' programmes spread out over five weeks, and this is done when their wives are three to eight months pregnant (Ball, 2010).

The Canadian government formulated several policies and developed many programmes to back various policies in order to improve early child care and education. This is done to ensure effective engagement of parents in their children's lives. As reported by Akbari and McCuaig (2014), policy such as 'Major transfer to Provincial and Territorial government' is backed up with a programme like 'Canada

Social Transfer'. The policy and programme is developed to support young children and their parents towards achieving holistic development of the young ones.

Also, a policy like 'First National and Aboriginal People' is backed up with programme like 'Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Affairs' and are all aiming at improving the early childhood education and care and also to support the parents, with particular reference to fathers, in taking active engagement in their children's lives (Akbari & McCuaig, 2014). However, such a policy and programmes of similar nature can also be adopted and implemented in South Africa with little adjustment to suit the needs of the young ones and their parents. Such programmes should always targeting fathers in particular to take active engagement in their children's lives.

Akbari and McCuaig (2014) highlight more programmes in Canadian government to improve the quality and accessibility of early childhood care and education of children and support for their parents. The programmes include: 'Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve', 'First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative', 'Child Care on Reserve'. Similar programmes can also be adopted in South Africa to cater for the young ones and give more support to their parents, in particular, to fathers. The Canadian government also embarked on a programme that centres on father-child development. The programme is tagged 'Dad and me', thus providing the father and child an opportunity to interact and play together, thereby, increasing their mutual and social ties (Hoffman, 2011).

As Ball (2010) reports that in Canada, positive fathering roles do improve children's health, development and educational outcomes as well as great benefits to fathers themselves in terms of their well-being. To support this, there is more strong support and awareness for more public recognition of fathers as a resource for children in promoting child's health, better performance at school and improved behaviour (Ball, 2010). Programmes like: 'more than haircut', 'tips from the barber shop' are also a case in point.

Ball (2010) writes that in order to involve fathers in the lives of their children, programmes like 'More Than a Haircut' were initiated for fathers. Groups of fathers hold an innovative monthly drop-in-support group in a community barbershop. The main discussion of this group is to focus on the issues concerning the black fathers in relation to the caring and nurturing of their children such as teaching and reinforcing positive cultural identities and guiding children's behaviour. The group also comes up with a publication for fathers, "Black Fatherhood on Fathering."

"Tips from Baber shop" is also a specific programme for fathers to be actively involved in their children's lives. This is an educational programme for fathers in an Ontario-based group, and it is one of the longest surviving programmes for pre and post-natal education (Ball, 2010). However, the methodology is on the importance of fathers in the lives of their children and how good fatherhood could be promoted in the families, which positively has an impact on children's lives (Ball, 2010).

2.3.2.5 Policies and specific programmes in Dubai

Bennett (2009) points out that formidable and quality of an early childhood care and education in Dubai is the attention that focuses on parents. 'Parental leave', 'Parenting education', networking, relevant courses in secondary schools, websites, radio and television messages are disseminated to parents in order to be actively engaged in their children lives. In addition to policy and programmes in Dubai, a programme called 'Parental involvement in children's learning' is initiated. This programme is carried out by early childhood centres with parents where pictures and films of parents with children together and socializing with each other are shown. The aim of this show is for the parents to invest in their children's socialization and learning, especially during the early childhood period but particular reference will be on fathers (Bennett, 2009).

Also 'Home-school links' is a programme to reach out to parents to improve learning opportunities for their children (Bennett, 2009). To support the argument, Al Sumaiti (2012) expresses that the input of parents is of paramount importance in a child's life. Communication by parents, particularly the father at an early stage of the child's life, sets skills that are acquired during childhood.

2.3.2.6 Policies and specific programme in United Kingdom.

The Government in United Kingdom has developed various programmes to support parents, with particular reference to fathers, in all aspects of a child's wellbeing. Taguma, Litjens and Makowieck (2012) indicate numbers of programmes adopted by

the government in UK such includes: the 'Home Interaction Programme for Parents and Youngster' (HIPPY). This programme focuses on the role of parents as home educators or first educator in the lives of children. There is also, a programme like, 'High Scope Perry Pre School programme' which provides learning and home visit to less privileged children and their parents (Taguma *et al.*, 2012). In short, the UK government adopted a policy of engagement of parents in evaluating ECCE services. Parents are included in evaluating child care as well as pre-primary education services. This is done through observation in collaboration with ECCE staff members and management. Taguma *et al.* (2012) emphasise more on different programmes adopted by UK. These include: 'Home Learning Environment' (HLE), 'Parenting at home', participating in ECCE activities', 'Partnerships between parents', 'Communicating and ECCE centres'.

Potter *et al.* (2012) also highlight that UK policy to get fathers engaged in the lives and education of their children including: The children Act (2006), The Gender Equity Duty (2007), and the 'Think Fathers' Campaign (2009)', all these policies focus on how effectively fathers can be engaged in the lives and education of their children. Porter *et al.* (2012) explain that 'Think Father Campaign' is a new programme designed for fathers to encourage family-friendly public services aiming to promote the engagement of fathers in the educational lives of children. The programme brings together government representatives and all those working with parents and children to celebrate the important roles of fathers in their family life and try to overcome some of the challenges faced by fathers.

2.4 Importance of father engagement in ECCE

There is an abundance of compelling evidence that the positive engagement of fathers promotes better child well-being and outcomes in social, moral, psychological, physical and emotional well-being of children (Ball, 2010; Lamb, 2010; Pleck, 2010; Buba & Hall, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Emerson et al., 2012). Significantly, most recent studies (Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Mncanca & Okeke, 2015; Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016) all submitted that fathers' engagement in the early lives and education of their children has been documented to be of relatively positive and greater educational achievement.

However, it is of great concern that fathers from a lower social economic class are less likely to be engaged in their children's lives (Potter *et al.*, 2012). In addition, the authors commented that the working fathers especially are not visible in the early childhood care and education (ECCE) of their children due to the fact that the environments are mainly designed to meet the needs of mothers and their children. On a crucial note, studies have shown that children whose fathers are not engaged in their lives and education demonstrate worse educational outcomes and behavioural problems (Lamb, 2010; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015). Significantly, Mashiya *et al.* (2015) and Noel *et al.* (2015) commented further that children of non-engaged fathers are likely to take into drugs, behavioural deterioration, emotional imbalances, lower academic performance and health degradation.

Research reports also demonstrate that the engagement of fathers in the education of their children helps bring about children's positive attitude towards learning, which results in an improved behaviour in school (Pleck, 2010; Huerta, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Higgins & Morley, 2014). To corroborate this submission, studies indicate that when fathers are involved in the education and lives of young children, either at home or at school, there is greater level of improvement for children (Emerson *et al.*, 2012; Hopkins, 2013; Bhise & Sonawat, 2013; Higgins & Morley, 2014; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

In addition, studies also confirm that fathers have strong positive influence towards better and improved social behaviour in the lives of their children if they are involved (Okeke, 2014; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mncanca & Okeke, 2015; Clyde, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Furthermore, Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) argue that when fathers are involved, children develop a close relationship and high level of security. Moreover, more studies emphasize that children's early years' education is laid on a good foundation when fathers are involved. This result in positive output, moral improvement, good social interpersonal relationship, improvement in psychological behaviour and high graduation rates (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

In order to establish the importance of the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children and education, for an example, a South African-based rural study exploring the factors affecting rural men participation in early lives and education of their

children (Mufutau & Okeke, 2016) found that the majority of the fathers were actively involved in the lives of their children in various ways, although few fathers expressed their dismay that mothers of their children still constitute a barrier for their active involvement. This study revealed that fathers were aware of the importance of their engagement in the lives of their children, which shows a positive relationship between a father's engagement and children's physical, mental, emotional, and social development (Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

Previous studies also indicate that children who experience father to child relationships that are nurturing and meaningful are more likely to have educational progression (Pleck, 2010; Okeke, 2014, Mufutau, 2015; Clyde, 2016). It is of paramount importance that there is the need for positive engagement of fathers at the early stages of lives and education of their children, especially from early years of development to adolescence of any young adulthood. The mechanism of fathers' active and meaningful engagement is set within the content of the perception that the fathers' behaviour as a whole constitutes several sources of influence on children's educational and holistic development.

Positive and active engagement of fathers ignite the following mechanisms in children's lives: lower dropout rates, better attendance in school, psychological importance, sociological growth, emotional significance, physical and mental health enhancement, strong father-child-bond, better educational outcomes/children result, behavioural improvement, cognitive development outcomes, positive role modelling,

ability to continue in education/learning, and greater achievement as well as ultimate success in life (Pleck, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hopkins, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Clyde, 2016;; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

a) Good guidance and better academic performance in school

Previous research works indicate that when fathers are able to give enough guidance to children, they later do better at school (Huerta, 2013; Higgins & Morley, 2014). Guidance means being given enough information about the importance of education and correcting any misbehaviour shown by the child, as well as monitoring the children to be of good character (Pleck, 2010; Okeke, 2014). Pleck (2010) points out that one of the ways by which academic achievement can be achieved by a child is when his/her father adequately gives enough guidance to such a child. The author emphasizes that good nurturing by a father makes a child to improve in academic performance, show better attendance in school, enables a child to cope with life's stressors, and continued with his/her education (Pleck, 2010).

(b) Psychological Significance

Research shows that children with an engaged father in their lives show the tendency to improve in cognitive functioning, IQ academic achievement and educational attainment (Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Invariably, children that grow up without the involvement of a father in their

lives are likely to experience, poverty, perform poorly in school, show behavioural problems, taking to drugs and lower attendance rate (Pleck, 2010; Bhise & Sonawat, 2013; Change, 2015).

However, the overwhelming research work indicates that when the fathers are engaging in children's lives and education, this will have a positive effect on the child's cognitive and academic performance optimally, together with moral and conscious development, sex-role development, and overall psychological competence (Pleck, 2010; Emerson *et al.*, 2012; Huerta, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). Significantly, fathers' engagement increases capabilities for young children, resulting in higher verbal skills, higher scores on assessments of cognitive competence and IQ (Fitzpatrick, 2011).

In supporting the argument of cognitive improvement of children when fathers are engaged, Hopkins (2013) reports that a 2001 US Department of Education study found that children with highly involved biological fathers were 43 percent more likely than other children to learn in school, and 33 percent less likely than other children to repeat a grade. This clearly demonstrates that children with active fathers' engagement excel in verbal and cognitive skills and have high IQs when compared to children whose fathers are not involving in their lives.

Mncanca and Okeke (2016) reveal that the uniqueness of fathers' engagement in the education of their children cannot be compared to mothers' engagement. This is attributed to the fact that fathers' engagement still promotes positive influence in the

lives of the children such as the improvement in Intelligence Quotient, high academic performance, and physical growth (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015). The engagement of fathers in a child's well-being and educational improvement cannot fully be replaced (Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

More importantly, Mufutau and Okeke (2016) agree that the engagement of fathers in the lives and education of their children is seen as a good behaviour that teaches self-control and socially appropriate behaviour. As a result, the cognitive reasoning abilities of the child are developed and improved. However, children whose fathers do not engage in their lives and education demonstrate worse educational outcomes and behavioural problems (Lamb, 2010; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015). In emphasizing the importance of fathers' engagement in the lives of the children, Fitzpatrick (2011) highlights some of the benefits children gain when fathers are involved in their lives, such benefits include: problem-solving abilities such as increased curiosity, greater tolerance for stress and frustration, and willingness try new things.

(c) Sociological growth

Research shows that children who are socially well connected with their fathers are likely to improve in terms of behaviour, emotional stability, showing interest in schooling, improved attendance rate, show improvement in IQs and the ability to complete learning (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hopkins, 2013; Clyde, 2016; Mncanca & Okeke,

2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). On the other hand, children that grow up without the engagement of their fathers are predominantly more likely to experience poverty, perform poorly in school, and engage in criminal activity, abuse drugs and alcohol (Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). In addition, when fathers are involved in the development of a positive relationship with their children by showing adequate support to their children, there is always a positive effect on children's social, cognitive and academic achievement and good behaviour (Clyde, 2016, Mncanca & Okeke, 2016).

There is strong evidence that parental engagement, with particular emphasis to fathers' engagement in the lives and education of their children, is regarded as fulfilling their roles as biological (reproduction), economic (financial provision), social (care giving) and legal (responsible in law) guardians (Mufutau, 2015; Clyde, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). This has a positive influence on children's lives and improves their academic achievement. In other words, fathers' contribution is consistently linked to measures of the children's development, the fact that information processing is increased, improvement in peer relationship and acceptance (Parker, 2014). Nurturing a child goes with adequate and effective training given to a child by the father and the training goes with self-discipline and the ability to cope with challenges that might arise in life (Pleck, 2010).

Young children particularly benefit greatly from their fathers' engagement through improved academic achievement which extends well into adolescence and young

adult hood (Hopkins, 2013). Nurturing a child goes with adequate and effective training given to a child by the father and the training equips the child with self-discipline and the ability to cope with challenges that might arise in life (Pleck, 2010).

(d) Emotional Significance

Studies have also made us know that children who have enjoyed active fathers' engagement are more likely to perform better in school and are less likely to suffer from depression and experience fewer school behavioural problems (Hopkins, 2013; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Children's educational success has been associated with the quality of the parents' relationships, with particular reference to fathers' engagement in the lives of their children, as revealed by various research works (Pleck, 2010; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Khewu & Adu, 2015, Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mufutau, 2015). In line with this argument, Clyde (2016), Mathwasa and Okeke (2016), Mufutau and Okeke (2016) all demonstrate that children that grow up with effective engagement of fathers do better in school and have more motivation, when compared with children whose fathers were not engaged in their lives. Invariably, studies by Khewu and Adu (2015), Mashiya *et al.* (2015) and Noel *et al.* (2015) also reveal that children with less engagement of fathers are more likely to experience distress, anger and self-doubt.

In a previous study by Childers (2010), it was pointed that fathers seem to play a role in many aspects of development of their children, particularly in their male child. Emotional distress and hostile intents were found to be relieved when fathers were characterized as warm and responsible to their children. However, Hopkins (2013) reveals that children whose fathers are involved in their lives from birth are more likely to demonstrate stronger emotional security, more confidence in exploring their surroundings and greater ability in forming social connections with their peers.

In addition, as they grow up in life, they are less likely to get into trouble at home, school or in the neighbourhood (Hopkins, 2013). Significantly, a father that plays with his children at home, teaches the children how to deal with aggressive impulses and physical contact without losing control of their emotions, thereby ensuring that they are able to control their emotion and do not engage in anti-social behaviour (Hopkins, 2013). As a result, when children receive emotional support from the father, they develop emotionally; they learn to develop a self-image based mostly on what others around them say and how they act towards them.

e) Physical/Muscular growth

Children need to exercise their muscles so that they learn to move easily and with confidence, control and co-ordinate their bodies and this comes from being motivated to run, jump, climb, hop and balance (Lamb, 2010). Most importantly, as expressed by Hopkins (2013), those children whose fathers are actively engaged in their children's lives are more likely to enjoy school, have a positive attitude towards

school, participate in extra-curricular activities and have completion rate in education. Additionally, not only do children gain from fathers' engagement, fathers themselves benefit as well when they spend time with their children. They tend to have greater confidence and self-esteem and become better fathers (Hopkins, 2013). A solid foundation could be established when fathers are actively engaged in their children's lives through play, as they explore their world when they are physically fit. Research demonstrates that the physical presence of a father and his active and meaningful engagement does positively affect children's health (Lamb, 2010).

(f) Strong father – child –bond

Previous research indicates that children whose fathers are involved in their care are more likely to be secured and attached to them, are better able to handle situations and are adaptable when faced with stressful situations (Mufutau, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Significantly, such toddlers are willing to explore the environment, relate more maturely to visitors, respond more competently to difficult and learning situations, and are more confident to explore their knowledge as a result, their social interaction will be enhanced (Clyde, 2016).

Fathers' engagement in the education of their children is viewed as fulfilling the role of the co-parent with the mother of the child, and his value is a function of how he fulfils those roles (Lamb, 2010). To buttress the intimate relationship of father-child, Lamb (2010) expresses that a father is seen as a primary caregiver, provider,

educator, and disciplinarian, and these promote children's achievements and improve behaviour among peers at school.

Fitzpatrick (2011) argues further that fathers, no matter what their income or cultural background, can play a critical role in their children's education and lives in order to strengthen the relationship of father and child and with this, children of very tight bond with their fathers are likely to explore more, perform better in school and exhibit healthier behaviour. However, the engagement of fathers in children's well-being cannot be substituted. More importantly, fathers must play a vital role to provide a healthy and enabling environment for their children to thrive and learn. Not only that, they need to protect their children socially, physically, emotionally, and economically throughout their livelihood with compassion and enduring love, through this, children's academic achievement will be improved, with less school dropout rates and increase in attendance (Huerta, 2013; Higgins & Morley, 2014).

(g) Better educational outcomes

Evidence from various research works reveals that children perform better when fathers engage actively in their educational development, they have an improved grade, are less likely to repeat a grade and are less likely to be sent out of school (Pleck, 2010; Emerson *et al.*, 2012; Huerta, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016). Additionally, good and active engagement of fathers in their children's lives contributes to the development of emotional security, curiosity, numeracy and reading skills (Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa &

Okeke, 2016). However, children who live without the engagement of fathers in their education are likely to have lower grade point average, lower college aspirations, poor attendance records and high drop–out rates (Lamb, 2010; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015).

Given the knowledge and importance of father's participation in the education of their children, families and children are able to benefit tremendously, and children's academic performance is developed and improved (Guolaug, 2010; Jorosi-Tshiamo, Mogobe, & Mokotdi, 2013). Not only that, children are more likely to excel in academics if their home environment is supportive (Lumpkin, 2010; Higgins and Morley, 2014).

(h) Lower dropout rate/Ability to continue in education

Childers (2010) reveals that children have a great chance of completing school and progressing in post-secondary education when parents have a strong marital and parental relationship. A strong marital and parental relationship will improve academic development and contribute to the accomplishment of, at least, one of the educational outcome, especially for children enrolled in post-secondary schools (Childers, 2010). Children benefit greatly from their fathers' engagement and when support the fathers give to their mothers (Mufutau, 2015).

(i) Greater achievement /Ultimate success in life.

The contributions of fathers in the lives of their children are very significant, and have positive effects in the lives of the young ones as they grow up to adulthood (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hopkins, 2013). Children with fathers who display an active engagement in their development are more likely to be guided to yield the skills and abilities to contribute to a child as a future citizen, future parent, business icons and future leaders (Pleck, 2010; Shears *et al.*, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mufutau, 2015). Studies (Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016; Parker, 2014) indicate that a child with an involved male figure in his/her life is likely to perform better than a child with only a female figure involvement. In addition, children with father's involvement in their lives are likely to have abilities to gain admission to post primary schools, post-secondary, and higher learning, and as a result, have better achievement academically, improved behaviour, emotional stability and are socially responsible (Pleck, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013)

(j) Positive role model

More significantly, the level of engagement and type of engagement the fathers show in their children's lives matters (Mufutau, 2015). In addition, the father himself has a great impact on the child's educational life and the more the father cares for the child, the more he becomes involved with the child, and this has positive outcomes for children (Okeke, 2014).

More important with regards to fathers' engagement in the lives and education of their children is that the child sees his father as a role model (Mufutau, 2015). A role model must not be a disappointment and a role model motivates a child, dresses him/her up in the morning and prepares him/her daily to go to school. When fathers are playing active role models for the child, children's educational achievements improve and they end up with less anti-social behaviour and have positive relationship with peers (Mufutau, 2015; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

k) Positive moral influence

Mufutau & Okeke (2016) explain that fathers' engagement in the education of their children plays a significant part in nurturing, guidance, teaching, modelling, economic support as well as co-operating support with the mother. Moreover, a father's engagement is applauded because of the good care he gives to the children, the lessons he teaches and the lessons he allows his children to learn independently, and this shows qualities of good engagement in their children's lives (Pleck, 2010; Clyde, 2016). Therefore, it is the responsibility of a good father to provide, nurture and guide his children, physically, emotionally and be spiritually present in his children's lives so they that feel loved and cared for (Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

Moreover, Parker (2014) maintains that children have a sense of positive relationships with peers, have respect for others as well as uphold their dignity when fathers actively engage in their lives. The relationship between a father and his children has been found to have a major impact on a child's development. As Parker

(2014) indicates, the interaction that a father has with his children will definitely have an impact on the child's social interaction with the peers and the social information processing the child develops. When fathers are involved in children's lives, therefore, their social information processing is improved, and peer acceptance, together with the child's relationships will definitely improve.

2.5 Challenges affecting fathers' engagement in ECCE

Consequently, there is a father factor in nearly all of the social issues militating against father's engagement in South Africa today. But the hope lies in the fact that children with involved fathers do better across every measure of child well-being than their counterparts in father absent homes.

Fathers have, arguably, the most important role in children's development from birth through the transition to adulthood; father interactions and the environment they provide have a crucial impact on children's cognitive, emotional, physical and sociological development. A responsive, involved, warm and consistent father is recognised with positive child and adolescent development outcome (Lamb, 2010; Pleck, 2010; Okeke, 2014; Huerta, 2013; Wilson, 2015). Conversely, poor engagement of fathers can be highly detrimental (Change, 2015; Khewu & Adu, 2015, Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

Despite the overwhelming interest of fathers' engagement in the early education of their children, fathers are still confronted with many challenges which hinder their

effective engagement in the lives of their children. Fathers are confronted with many challenges ranging from lack of time, language barriers, lack of confidence and fear of school (Claycomb, 2007; Sheng, 2012). Research clearly indicates that fathers face challenges such as teachers' attitudes towards fathers, parent–teacher's factor as well as societal factor (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

Despite all these odds, most fathers take their role very seriously and are consciously trying to do the right thing but are still faced with the challenges that mothers' attitudes towards them still remain a major barrier (Mufutau & Okeke, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). In addition, research has found that a majority of fathers in South Africa, compared to the other parts of this world, are absent in the lives of their children (Richter *et al.*, 2012). Previously, Statistics South Africa (2011) confirmed that a third of South African children live in the house without their biological father.

Research clearly shows that challenges such as a stereotyped type of family & cultural beliefs, individual parents & family factors, educational level of fathers, societal factors, poverty, lack of social support, civil law, labour law, migration and unemployment can significantly have an impact on fathers' functioning in the lives of their children (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). Although various studies (Marcisz, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Rembe & Sotuku, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016) indicate the overwhelming challenges confronting

father in playing an active role in the lives and education of their children, the schools, stakeholders, government and society as a whole must stand up for the need to support the fathers to come out of their slumber and give greater priority to their children's lives and education. As mentioned earlier by national and international research, particularly in the area of early childhood care and education regarding the challenges fathers are facing in active engagement in the lives and education of their children, there is the need to expatiate more on these various challenges.

a) Lack of time

As earlier reported by previous research works, Jackson and Andrew (2004); and Epstein (2005), that the majority of fathers do not have enough time to be involved due to their poor social economic status which cripples their engagement, hence this adversely has an effect on the lives and education of their children (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). However, a study in United States of America by Claycomb (2007) concurs with the earlier studies by Jackson or Andrew (2004); and Epstein (2005), which revealed that fathers encountered various challenges preventing them from active engagement in early education and care (ECCE) of their children, among those challenges is the lack of time. Significantly, the researcher believes that children who do not receive attention, good caring, affection and fatherly role modelling from a father figure are deprived emotionally, socially, economically and

physically of benefits of life. An integrated approach can lead to the reformation of the roles of father in the family, particularly in nurturing their children.

b) Educational Level of fathers

The majority of fathers lack knowledge of what their children should be learning and do not want them to be further challenged (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). As a result, the lack of knowledge of basic education cripples their engagement in the lives and education of their children; this is sobering news for fathers and the children's holistic development in early childhood education and care (ECCE). In addition, Mathwasa and Okeke (2016), in their study of barriers educators face in involving fathers in the education of their children, found that some fathers wished they could be doing more when it comes to involvement in their child's education, while some are even less involved as a result of their level of education, which prevents them from active engagement; even though stakeholders in education across the nation have advocated for fathers to be more engaged in their child's education.

Research reveals that fathers' engagement in a child's education boosts children's learning and improves both behaviour and attendance (Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Clyde, 2016). Consequently, children with non-engaged fathers in their lives and education are at risk of taking to drugs, poor attendance rate, inability to complete learning, lower level of academic performance, lack of self-esteem, emotional

imbalance, behavioural disorder (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Okeke, 2014, Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

Most importantly, if fathers are academically disadvantaged, it is clearly shown that children of such fathers will experience lower engagement, if not total dysfunctional engagement from such a father, hence the possibility of exposing such children to experience the side effects of educational improvement and behavioural disorder. Based on these challenges of fathers, it is, therefore, necessary to explore actions, interventions and programmes that may increase their active engagement in the lives and education of their children.

c) Staff and teachers' attitudes

It is well documented that staff and teacher attitudes is another challenge faced by fathers in active engagement in the lives and education of their children (Claycomb, 2007; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). In a previous study in United States of America, Claycomb (2007) expresses the feelings of fathers whose fear of school prevented them from active engagement in the education of their children. This is a sad and ugly situation for the fathers; the school staff should make it their responsibility to welcome fathers into the school and have a good professional relationship with the fathers and not behave in an unprofessional way. In addition, Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) also point out that staff and teachers' attitude is also a serious challenge experienced by fathers, according to their study. Hence, there is need for a good rapport between the teachers and fathers in order to encourage them to play an

active role in school programmes which will be of benefit to their children's lives and education.

Consequently, it is important for staff and teachers to keep the lines of communication open, this should not be limited to sending notes or regular letters, but also obtaining information from fathers. Obtaining information from fathers can be done through phone calls in order to keep them informed about their children's educational lives and behaviour and to create a free flow of information between the teachers and fathers. Most significantly, Henrich (2013) points out that cellular phone calls and texting was introduced in support of existing home for fathers in the Head Start Programme, which yielded a positive involvement of fathers in the lives and education of their children

d) Societal factors

Father inclusion in early childhood programmes has received serious attention over the years, which is due to lack of involvement of fathers in the lives of many young ones. Notably, Wardle (2008) highlights further that male inclusion in early childhood education programmes needs a considerable attention. Regrettably, Cunningham and Dorsey (2004) express their deep feeling when it comes to teaching in early childhood education and care, namely, that males are not much more visible. Both reveal that, out of the total numbers of teachers that teach in elementary school, only 13 percent are male, while others are female. In addition, that 13 percent of males

teach in grade 5 and 6, meaning there is no male teacher in grade 4 below, the worse scenario is in pre-school and grade R.

Earlier, Sander (2002) points out that the field of early childhood is mostly dominated by, and attractive to, females probably because of the traditional roles of females' knowing best how to care and nurture a child when compared to men. To support this argument, Cunningham and Dorsey (2004) and also Wardle (2004) maintained that the cultural belief of the society is that females are known for the responsibility of nursing children both at home and outside the home.

Invariably, Wardle (2004) points out that males tend to be more physical and rough in entertainment and play activities when they interact with children at home or any programme. Hence, they may have a negative impact or a negative influence on the way the childhood programmes operate, which is quite passionate, playful, quiet, slowly, gently and which males might not be able to withstand, thereby creating a mess in the programme of activities (Wardle, 2004).

The dearth of fathers in early childhood education has an increased interest in father involvement in early childhood programmes (Wardle, 2008). To argue further, Wardle (2008) points out that while a majority of people support and agree with the inclusion to get fathers involved in the lives and education of their children, the solutions to this problem are still not yet met (Wardle, 2008)

In corroboration with Wardle (2008), Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) also point out the need to include males in the services of early childhood care provision, and a need to

change from the culture of female domination in the profession when it comes to the services provider. The effect of this cultural conflicts/practice can result in fathers experiencing a sense of difference and isolation on a daily basis, which was also a serious challenge facing fathers. As pointed out by Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) that educators have the intention to get fathers involved, but most of the involvement of fathers is limited by the teachers and the teachers prefer to get the mothers involved in the school activities, when compared to fathers. Hence, this is a worrisome situation for fathers regarding their active engagement in their children's lives and education.

A recent study in USA reveals that, when it comes to teaching the young one, males are a threat to the lives of the young children from judgemental nature of society (Murti, 2012). In California, USA for example, Murti (2012, p. 1) writes about the onus experienced by a male teacher:

It was a female staff member's conviction that males should not change diapers that compelled her and others to keep a careful eye on Adam at the centre. Their sexist paranoia led one of them to suspect Adam of having an erection after bouncing an infant on his laps, this suspicion once reported, not only ended Adam's career in early childhood education, but also the career of the centre's director who had hired him (Murti, 2012, p. 1).

In other words, this ugly experience by a male teacher has put males in doubt, painting them into a corner of having second thoughts and critical reflection on whether to engage himself in early childhood education and care as a career. However, this ugly report led to Adam being charged and found guilty of sexual abuse, resulting in many parents agreeing that males in general are a threat to early childhood and care education as a career and Adam lost his job (Murti, 2012). This experience could have a devastating effect on the engagement of fathers in the lives and education of their children.

Also, in New Zealand the proportion of male in early childhood care education was also minimal; from 2005 it was 1.0 percent and increased in 2010 to 1.8 percent, 2.2 percent in 2013 and a declined figure in 2015 to 2.0 percent (CHILD FORUM, 2016). This phenomenon of gender bias can only be stopped, if policy makers in Parliament can make the condition of services favourable for male and make policy that will compel females to see males as their equal counterpart in the field (CHILD FORUM, 2016).

However, fathers in South Africa tend not to be much more visible in the early lives of their children based on the evidence from various studies (Richter *et al.*, 2010; Richter *et al.*, 2012; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015). More importantly, their absence, of course, might be due to a series of societal and cultural problems or challenges they face in the effective involvement in the early education and care of their children. Consequently, in the United Kingdom, Potter *et al.* (2012) explain that

fathers, more especially the working fathers, are not visible in the early childhood education and care (ECCE) of their children due to the fact the environments are mainly designed to meet the needs of the mothers and their children. The authors further argue that in the early childhood education and care teaching profession, there is a reluctance to work with males by some female staff that appears to feel more comfortable relating with females than they want to do with males. This concurs with other research works, as highlighted above, when it comes to societal factors regarding the acceptance of male figures in the lives and education of children.

(f) Poor social economic status.

From time immemorial, social economic status of people in any country cannot be balanced, but it can be reduced minimally to improve the poor living conditions among citizens. Research works indicate that fathers are confronted with poor social economic status which prevents them from taking an active role in the lives and education of their children (Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Shumba, Rembe, Maphosa, Sotuku, Adu, Drake, Duku & Okeke, 2016). To support this argument, the earlier study by Mudzielwana (2014) in the study of teachers' perception on foundation phase learners' low reading performance, reveals that fathers are unable to support their children due to their poor social economic status and this affects the child negatively. Fathers that live far below normal average earning of income are at risk of not engaging in the lives of their children, this can be due to the high unemployment rate and a decline in the economy of a nation.

Evidence from preliminary review of literature reveals that fathers are confronted with poor social economic status which prevents them from taking an active involvement in the lives and education of their children (Mudzielwana, 2014; Noel *et al.*, 2015). This challenge is, however, supported by Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) in the study of barriers educators face involving fathers in the education of their children in the foundation phase. Among the findings, is an indication that fathers are unable to be involved in the lives and education of their children due to the poor social economic status. This challenge has been previously highlighted by Desmond and Desmond (2006) who argue that when it comes to fathers' income in South Africa it is a serious implication which prevents the fathers from living together with their families. To this effect, fathers are always in search of better income and this makes them to be far away from the home or stay away from their responsibilities.

In addition, Mudzielwana (2014) reiterates that poor living conditions of parents in the rural areas of Limpopo where the majority of fathers live, contributed to their lack of involvement in the lives and education of their children. It was found that children from this poor social economic background were struggling to read, when asked to read in the classroom by the teacher. However, this poor living condition of parents, with particular reference to father, who is the head of the household, will definitely cripple his involvement in the lives and education of his children.

2.6 Implication for policy on ECCE in South Africa

The existing approach of government policy with respect to ECCE can only be described as aspiration planning, when it comes to the issues of fathers' engagement, as well as specific programmes designed to boost the morale of fathers in ECCE. Many of the policies and programmes target the mothers, caregivers and children while little attempt is made at addressing the fathers. Ironically, the new national integrated early childhood development policy document (Government of South Africa, GSA, 2015) seems to have focused mainly on the needs mothers, children, care givers and being silent on fathers' engagement as well as about specific programmes to get fathers involved in the education of their children.

Unlike their female partnership, the new policy document is specific on how programmes may support mothers and their children. For example, paragraph 6 of page 28 (GSA, 2015) emphasizes the need for adequate care and support for pregnant women in the workplace as well as soliciting intensive care for HIV-positive mothers. Not only that, special treatment and care for HIV-positive mothers is aligned in the policy document (GSA, 2015). But it is silent regarding the treatment and care as well as programmes for fathers living with HIV- AIDS. The possibility is high that an HIV--positive pregnant mother will be impregnated by an HIV-positive father or vice versa, hence, both need equal treatment.

While numerous studies have noted that fathers in South Africa tend not to be visible in the lives of their children (Richer *et al.*, 2012; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015), the new national integrated early childhood development policy document (GSA,

2015) has not shown how fathers may be engaged in ECD programmes. However, without the new policy on ECCE effectively initiating the framework for the engagement of fathers in early child hood and education development, the effective roles of fathers in the lives of the children in South Africa will continue to be a force which needs to be driven by collective and motivational society,

It is, therefore, imperative for the government in South Africa to advocate for ECCE policies that lay out concrete commitment and guidelines for fathers regarding their children's survival, development and, above all, educational achievements. More importantly, the ability of the society to support linkage between broad social policies in terms of strong bond and effective engagement of fathers to their children and specific results based interventions given to the children and father's comparative advantage cannot be overemphasised (Shumba *et al.*, 2016).

The three levels of government must have strong policies on ECCE and such policies must be reviewed from time to time, based on its positive outcomes and intervention given, either through preschool services, parenting programmes, child care facilities, or other interventions. In developed countries, like Dubai, UK, USA and Canada, to mention but a few, the inclusion of fathers has a strong advocate and support in the development of the national comprehensive policy on ECCE policies on fathers' engagement in the lives of their children. (Al Sumaiti, 2012; Potter *et al.*, 2012; Akbari & McCuaig, 2014)

South Africa's ECCE policy must promote holistic early childhood development and programme packages that address effective fathers' engagement in the lives of the children, in order for the children to have complete physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual needs in life. The development of hallmark South Africa's ECCE policy regarding the recognition of a father as an important figure, not just with stereotype traditional roles fathers play in the life of a child, will lead to a robust institutional framework that provides a new framework for government, both national and provincial, societies, families, private sector, non-governmental organisations, with particular reference to fathers, to invest and implement childhood care and education programmes.

Shumba *et al.* (2016) point out that there must be clear policies in early childhood care and education that are needed to actively engage the fathers in the lives of their children. Policy development and change does not have to be a top-down process, resting solely on the hands of lawmakers and departmental officials. Most significantly, policy is not created in a vacuum. Every societal effort, successful research project or advocacy effort has the potential to influence the thinking of decision-makers, fathers, and stakeholders in education about what best support can be rendered for fathers. Hence, fathers need to wake up from their slumber and be actively as well as positively engaged in the lives of their children and have robust family lives. As concerned citizens, parent, teachers, community leaders, we can all have positive impact on robust and effective policy formation regarding the positive

engagement of fathers in the lives of education their children. The fathers need our help, so do the children (Shumba *et al.*, 2016).

The authors explain that with trends towards delegation and variation of policy and provision regarding fathers' inclusion in ECCE policy, there must be more variation in programming and quality at all levels of ECCE policy implementation. A common framework can help ensure an even level of quality of fathers' engagement across different forms of programme provisioning that will enhance their engagement in their children's lives. While, given adequate provision for father's adaption to needs and circumstance, a clear view and articulation of goals, whether in education field, policy formulation and implementation, media publicity and societal support, can help foster programmes that will promote the effective and positive engagement of fathers in ECCE and enhance a complete well-being of children and respond adequately to their needs regarding their fathers' total support in their lives (Shumba *et al.*, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016),

Well defined programmes for fathers in ECCE policy will serve the interest of young ones. Young children may miss out on a stimulating environment or good family lives or good father to child relationship that are of high importance in the early years, if fathers fail to stand up for their responsibilities due to one reason or the other. ECCE policy must be more culturally diverse with the involvement of parents, and not only focus attention on mothers alone or care-givers. It needs to be acknowledged that fathers might have different needs and aspirations, without the support of

government, society, NGO and education practitioners, and that such needs and aspirations might not be fulfilled or fade away. Good policy destined to accommodate fathers' engagement in the lives of children has been found to reduce disruptive and inattentive behaviour, promote good attendance at school, positive development of self-esteem, high graduation rates and improvement in IQ (Pleck, 2010; Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Clyde 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

More importantly, a wide range of cultures and communities' settings in which children develop makes it important to engage fathers in developing and reforming policy and to adopt curricula, as the needs arise, to local or cultural circumstances. This is to ascertain that the policies actually meet children's needs and truly focus on the children and their holistic development regarding full positive and effective engagement of fathers in their lives.

In multi-cultural societies like South Africa, government must create a skilled and knowledgeable workforce and prioritise share values for building a sense of belonging among parents with particular reference to fathers, and not to focus only on mothers and care-givers. Meanwhile, mothers or law, as well as customs, may be more concerned with who has full custody of the child with regards to specific beliefs on child rearing. But policy formulation and implementation can contribute to balancing different expectations of early childhood development and ensure that

expectations and needs of different stakeholders are achieved (Benett, 2011; Vandenbroeck, 2011).

2.7 Summary of literature review

In summary, the preliminary review of literature relating to the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education of their children has been discussed. The inspiration here is to elucidate the formation of the broader chapter of the literature review and to give in-depth information on the empirical studies about the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education of their children and implication for policy and practice. The review covered the following sub-sections including fatherhood in South Africa in the context of ECCE; draft policy on early childhood care and education; examples of policies and specific programmes: a global context; importance of fathers' engagement in ECCE; strategies to overcome challenges affecting fathers' engagement in ECCE and the implication for policy reviews for the current study.

The theoretical framework underpinning the present study is based on Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Social Ecological Model of Human Development. Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that, in order to understand human development, one must consider the entire ecological system in which growth occurs (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Bronfenbrenner believes that the main relationship needs to be with someone who can offer a sense of caring that is meant to last a life time. This relationship must be promoted by a person or people within the immediate sphere of the child's

influence. School and teachers should work to support the major relationship and create an environment that welcomes and promotes families. Society should agitate for policy that supports the importance of parent's roles, with particular reference to fathers in their children's development. The current study aims at increasing protective factors, while recognizing the children as active systems interacting with at least three other interacting active systems, their immediate environment (e.g. teacher, family in particular reference to fathers), the community and society as a whole (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). As a result, fathers make meaningful contributions towards their children's educational career.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter covers an overview of the methodology in this study. The discussion in this chapter is structured around the research paradigm, research approach, research design, location of the study, population of study, sample size and sampling procedures, instrumentation, validity and reliability of the instruments, data collection procedures and method of data analysis. Ethical considerations and requirements are also discussed.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The study adopted the positivist/post-positivist paradigm which mostly involves a quantitative research approach. “Positivist paradigm is referred to as one that is based on testing a theory, where the theory relates to variables, which variables are measured with numbers and analysed with statistical procedures...” (Bakkabulindi, 2015, p. 22). Creswell (2014) explains that the “post-positivist assumptions have represented the traditional form of research, and these assumptions hold true more for quantitative research than qualitative research. It is also called positivist/post-positivist research, empirical science, and post-positivism” (Creswell, 2014, p.36). It was, therefore, found suitable for this study because it uses the scientific method of natural science to study human activity using objective enquiry and it attempts to

investigate and validate the norm of behaviour in testing theories and hypotheses. It is in line with this argument that this paradigm is found relevant by the researcher to adopt in finding out stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning. Positivism is, therefore, an approach in social science that attempts to employ the natural science model of research for the exploration of social occurrence and justifications of the social world (Denscombe, 2001). Creswell (2014) retreats further that "post-positivists hold a deterministic philosophy in which causes (probably) determine effects or outcomes. Thus, the problems studied by post-positivists reflect the need to identify and assess the causes that influence outcomes, such as found in experiments" (Creswell, 2014, p.36). As a result, the choice of researcher for post-positivist paradigm is to investigate the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning and to identify various needs to assist fathers on how best they can be engaged in their children's lives. More significantly, how the policy and practice will be put in place to get fathers engaged in their children's educational lives.

The researcher took cognisance of the idea that those involved (participants) are in the best position to make their own opinion known. The reasoning behind employing this paradigm is further propelled by the historical events that preceded the present scenario of the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning and implications for policy and practice. The background outlined in the previous chapters prepares the ground for an approach of this nature. Therefore, as a quantitative research is essentially about collecting numerical data to explain a

particular phenomenon, particular questions seem immediately suited to being answered using quantitative methods (Muijs, 2011).

Whenever one is permitted to join a certain group or groups as a 'researcher' it is vitally important to avoid taking anything for granted. For the researcher, this has been the case because of many reasons, among which are the age gap and level of commitment shown by the research participants. The unfolding of the research problem in chapter one has convinced the researcher that fathers' engagement in early education of their children is an unfinished revolution and, as such, an investigation of this nature is important in order to discover whether there are fathers who are committed to the total upbringing of their children in all levels of life in order to achieve the full potential of these children and the development of the society and the nation at large.

By its very conception, the study fits well within this paradigm, which by its nature sets out to describe, interpret, relate and explain the manner in which participants make sense of situations and the way meanings are reflected in their actions. To this end, in trying to project the success as against the failures of this paradigm, Bakkabulindi (2015) maintains that the main contention of the school of philosophy is that the positivist study is based on testing a theory that relates to variables and these variables are measured with numbers and analysed statistically. Therefore, in order to uncover the world of participants, the researcher chose the positivist research paradigm.

3.2 Research Approach

3.2.1 Quantitative research approach

This study utilized the quantitative research approach to obtain primary data in line with the positivist/post-positivist paradigm. According to Flick (2015, p. 270), “a quantitative research method is aiming at covering the phenomena under study in their frequencies and distribution and thus working with large numbers in the data collection.” In other words, going through the body of knowledge, the researcher realized that the quantitative method can be used for a broader study and generalization of the findings, ideas, concepts and further beliefs regarding an event or phenomena. Furthermore, quantitative research is explained by various researchers. Creswell (2014, p. 295) in his own definition, states that: “Quantitative research is a means of testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables can be measured, typically using instruments, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures.” In addition, Muijs (2011) explains quantitative research to be an explanation of phenomena by collecting data that can be analysed using mathematical-based methods (in particular statistics). In accordance with the above explanations, the researcher, therefore, considered the quantitative method suitable for use because of its ability to allow for a broader study, which involves a greater number of subjects and the way it enhances the generalization action of results. Moreover, adopting this method is based on the belief that the truth is out there, and it is the duty of the researcher to

use the quantitative research method to uncover the truth wherein quantitative methods give room for objectivity.

With both historical and natural human conduct characterizing this study's research participants, the researcher agrees with Birley and Moreland (1998:41) who argue that research "method must produce data that is relevant to the research questions and be able to provide answers or illumination on the topic." This is best done by a method taken largely from the natural sciences which are transposed to social research settings (such as education). Therefore, as the quantitative research method is essentially about collecting numerical data to explain a particular phenomenon, particular questions seem immediately appropriate to being answered using quantitative methods (Muijs, 2011).

The researcher's motivation for the choice of quantitative method emanated from UK study conducted by Preston, Cameron and Wilde (2014) on the relationship between parental engagement, digital home-links and pupils' achievement. The result indicates that improvement in achievement takes place when parents and teachers make the most of digital home-school links. As a result, parents are far more mobile than they used to be and many schools encourage outside activities, not the least, sports. The authors adopted quantitative methodologies to uncover the truth about a particular phenomenon. More importantly, the insight and knowledge the researcher will gain from these findings is that the meaning and the truth of any idea are a function of its practical outcome(s), which the quantitative research approach is able

to explore (Muijs, 2011). Therefore, the researcher adopted a quantitative approach in order to study a large number of respondents aiming at obtaining information on the stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood education of their children.

3.3 Research Design of the Study

The study adopted a survey research design of the correlational type. A survey research design “provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). Among the advantages of survey research design are: i) the ability to identify attributes of a large population from a small group of individuals (Fowler, 2009 as cited in Creswell, 2014, p. 203), ii) because of its economic design and the rapid turnaround in data collection (Creswell, 2014, p. 203). Some of the disadvantages of survey research design are: i) people's answers to survey items may not reflect their true feelings or subsequent actions; ii) survey can also seem superficial, when compared with field research (Duarte & Miller, 2015). Moreover, the survey design was chosen by the researcher because of its capacity to describe data whether in words, pictures, charts or tables. Since the phenomenon to be studied already exists and the population from which data on this phenomenon could be collected is large, a survey (sample survey to be precise) is appropriate for research of this nature.

The reason for the choice of correlational type of survey research design is to be able to investigate the relationship among variables of the study in addition to the

descriptive aspect. Investigating the relationship among variables is useful for determining the extent to which one variable is influencing another. This is also necessary in this study because there is the need to investigate some variables that might be influencing the extent to which fathers engage in the early education of their children.

Therefore, the design aims to collect numerical data on stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood education provisioning, describe the findings and help take a step further to examine relationship between some identified variables and the level of fathers' engagement in the early education of their children.

3.4. Location of the Study

The study took place within the rural and urban community in one of the education districts in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The choice of the Eastern Cape Province was made based on the standard of education in the district. The performance of learners in Foundation, Intermediate and High schools in the province is not only below expectation but also among the lowest compared to other provinces in South Africa (Spaull, 2013) Therefore, there is a need to research on the fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provision, being the foundations phase of all learning. Fathers are not taking active roles in the lives of the children that might be negatively affecting the standard of education in this province and this study is one of such research studies. The reason for the choice of location is that the

selection is based on common characteristics and the geographical area in which they are located.

Geographically, the pre-schools are in rural and urban areas of the district. The study was carried out in King William's Town Education District in order to have participants that share a common culture, values, beliefs and other characteristics and are bound by a geographical area where they are located. The Education District chosen has rural, semi-urban as well as urban locations in its area coverage. This enabled the study to involve fathers with diverse socio-economic status.

3.5. Population of the Study

Population refers "to the large group to which a researcher wants to generalize the sample results, the complete set of cases" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 669). The population of this study comprises all principals and teachers, fathers and mothers of pupils in Preschools (0-4years) and Grade R aspects of foundation phase in King William's Town Education District in the Eastern Cape Province. Principals and teachers were chosen because they work in the education setting where children are meant to be educated. Fathers and mothers are the parents of the children who are supposed to ensure fathers' engagement in the development of their children.

3.6 Sample size

Lumadi (2015, p. 224) defines a sample as “the total number of items taken from the population under study, which is ultimately used in statistical measurements.” The sample of stakeholders, that is, teachers (teachers/principals) and parents (mothers/fathers) were sampled from the population of all stakeholders of preschool and Grade R parts of Foundation Phase teachers across schools in the King William’s Town Education District of Eastern Cape, using a multi-stage sampling technique. As Flick (2015, p. 269) indicates, “research studies mostly include selections (samples) from a population and the results are generalized from sample to populations.” The sample size for this study was 400, and guided by the sample of Boyd (2006, as cited by Lumadi, 2015, p. 228, as shown in table 3.1).

Table 3.1: The Required Sample Size

Population Size	Confidence = 95%				Confidence = 99%			
	Margin of Error				Margin of Error			
	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
20	19	20	20	20	19	20	20	20
30	28	29	29	30	29	29	30	30
50	44	47	48	50	47	48	49	50
75	63	69	72	74	67	71	73	75
100	80	89	94	99	87	93	96	99
150	108	126	137	148	122	135	142	149
200	132	160	177	196	154	174	186	198
250	152	190	215	244	182	211	229	246
300	169	217	251	291	207	246	270	295
400	196	265	318	384	250	309	348	391
500	217	306	377	475	285	365	421	485
600	234	340	432	565	315	416	490	579
700	248	370	481	653	341	462	554	672
800	260	396	526	739	363	503	615	763
1000	278	440	606	906	399	575	727	943
1200	291	474	674	1067	427	636	827	1119
1500	306	515	759	1297	460	712	959	1376
2000	322	563	869	1155	498	808	1141	1785
2500	333	597	952	1984	524	879	1288	21793

(Boyd, P. 2006)

3.7 Sampling Procedures

The Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample of this study. According to Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010), multi-stage sampling involves the adoption of different sampling techniques at different stages of sampling in a study. The first stage was the selection of schools to be involved in the study. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select eight schools across the four satellite

jurisdictions in the whole district. That is, two schools were randomly selected from each satellite jurisdiction.

The second stage was the selection of the principals and the teachers to be involved in the study. Total enumeration technique was used to select both the principal and the deputy from all the selected schools. At the end, 2 principals in each school (16 principals in all) were involved in the study. The random sampling technique was used to select 12 teachers in each school in each of the selected schools (96 teachers in all). This was achieved by selecting three teachers each from a class of 0-2years, 2-3years, 3-4 years and Grade R. This gave a total of 112 preschool and Grade R parts of Foundation Phase principals/teachers across schools in the King William's Town Education District.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select all the preschool (0-4years) and Grade R classes in the selected schools. The only criterion for this selection is that parents of children in preschool and Grade R, which is the level of education before formal Grade 1, are the focus stakeholders in the study. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 18 mothers and 18 fathers of children in the selected classes. The criteria that were used here are:

- i. The parent must be ready to be involved in the study.
- ii. The parents must be able to read and respond to questions without any second hand information from another person.
- iii. The parent must have at least a child in preschool or Grade R in the school.

At the end, 144 mothers and 144 fathers of children in preschool and Grade R participated in the study, this amounts to 288 parents.

Therefore, the sample of this study are 16 principals, 96 preschool teachers and 288 parents of children in preschool and Grade R in the King William's Town Education District in the Eastern Cape Province.

3.8 Instruments for Data Collection

Two self-designed questionnaires were used in this study. A questionnaire is defined as a list of questions presented to every participant in a study in an identified way, either written or orally (Flick, 2015, p. 270). The use of the questionnaire is preferred because it makes data compilation simple, and it is also easy to analyse with the use of computer software package (Muijs, 2011). The two questionnaires designed are: Principal and Teachers Views Questionnaire (PTVQ) and Father and Mother Views Questionnaire (FMVQ). Section B of PTVQ seeks information regarding their views as educators, on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning. Section B of FMVQ seeks information regarding their views as parents on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning. The instruments PTVQ and FMVQ have the same sections C-E seeking information on stakeholders support mechanisms, strategies, and policies put in place to encourage, promote fatherhood initiatives and motivate fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning. The first part of each instrument seeks demographic information and the second part was based on a rating scale that

allows respondents to indicate the level of their opinion on an item. A rating scale of a modified 4-point Likert rating scale was used for the purpose of analysis, and these are: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The demographic information was coded: Age= age in years. Also, the 4-point Likert rating scales were coded: SA=1, A= 2, D= 3, SD= 4, for negative items and the reverse - SA= 4, A= 3, D= 2, SD= 1, for positive items. The questionnaires were administered to teachers and parents containing (20) questionnaire items and open response spaces for additional comments.

3.9 Instrument Validity and Reliability.

Validity refers to whether one can draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores on particular instruments (Creswell, 2014, p. 297). It is important because it allowed the researcher to adequately focus on important information regarding responses from the respondents. Consequently, validity is described as “whether a given instrument is correctly measuring the variables that it is intended to measure” (Bakkabulindi, 2015, p. 31). In order to enhance content validity, the researcher subjected the instruments to the scrutiny of the research supervisor. The instruments were also pre-tested in field study. Reliability refers to “whether scores to items on an instrument are internally consistent (i.e., are the item responses consistent across constructs?), stable over time (test-retest correlations), and whether there was consistency in test administration and scoring” (Creswell, 2014, p. 295). Flick (2015, p. 270) also refers to reliability as “a standard criterion in standardized/quantitative

research which is based on repeated application of a test to assess whether the results are the same in both cases.” To ensure reliability, the instruments were field-tested. The reliability of the instruments was obtained at a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, of 0.94 and 0.96. The instrument was deemed reliable since the obtained alpha coefficients were 0.94 and 0.96 above the acceptable .70 (Delpont & De Vos, 2005).

3.9.1 Field-testing of Instruments

Field-testing of instrument is a process of administering the designed research instrument in order to test its feasibility and reliability (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, 20 copies each of the validated instruments were produced and administered to teachers and parents outside the sample of this study. Two schools were selected for this purpose and the Cronbach alpha technique was used to test the reliability of the instruments and the coefficients obtained were 0.94 and 0.96 for the PTVQ and FMVQ questionnaire, respectively.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is a technique for physically obtaining data to be analysed in a research study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 225). The researcher personally administered the questionnaires in all cases. A questionnaire instrument purposely designed for teachers (teacher/principal) was given to them to fill. In addition, another questionnaire purposely designed for parents (mother and father) was also given to parents through the class teachers of each learner and enveloped and

addressed to the parents for safe delivery. The researcher met with the School governing body (SGB) during parents' meeting to discuss the nature of the research and explained the questionnaire to them in details. The researcher requested them to quickly return the questionnaire within two weeks for collection. The researcher went back after two weeks to collect the questionnaire from the teachers and that of the parents through the class teacher.

3.11 Data Analysis Procedures

Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. With descriptive statistics, frequency tables were used to present nominal variables. The data were represented graphically using the pie chart. The mean, and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and inferential statistics of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, Analysis of Variance and t-test were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The responses to the research questions will help identify various ways where fathers are not doing enough to be engaged in the early childhood care and education provisioning of their children. The responses also reveal where fathers are doing their best to be engaged in the early childhood care and education provisioning of their children.

3.12. Ethical Considerations and Requirements

One focus of educational research is on human beings. Consequently, the researcher is ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the

participant, which involves issues such as physical and mental discomfort as well as harm and danger. As Oliver (2008) points out in his overview of ethics in research, ethical issues arise before, during and after the actual research activity within a project. Ethical clearance was obtained through FREC and UREC, University of Fort Hare, as well as a permission letter from DBE to conduct the study in the schools. The researcher endeavoured to act within the ethical principles and rules during the study. During the study, the following were, therefore, observed: gaining entry or permission, participants' rights, informed consent, confidentiality, protection from harm, achieving anonymity and maintaining professionalism.

3.12.1 Gaining Entry

To allow the researcher to gain entry or permission for the study, a recognition letter was requested and obtained from the Faculty of Education, University of Fort Hare. After obtaining this recognition letter, another permission letter was sought from the Eastern Cape Department of Education to enable the study to take place in the schools. Moreover, another permission letter was also obtained from the District Director of Education, King William's Town District to enable the researcher to conduct the research within this district.

In addition, letters were written to the school governing councils, principals and teachers, as well as parents of Foundation Phase learners (participants) for

permission to undertake the study in the schools. Permission documents obtained accompanied each letter written at various stages to the bodies concerned.

3.12.2 Voluntary Participation

Participation in the study was voluntary. Voluntary participation means that participants cannot be compelled, coerced or required to participate. No one should be forced to participate in a research study. In this study, therefore, respondents were allowed to exercise their right to be part of the research and the right to withdraw from the research at any time and for any (or no) reason. Therefore, the participants could make a voluntary decision about whether or not to participate in the study (Mertens, 2014).

3.12.3 Informed Consent

Informed consent is achieved by providing participants with an explanation of the research, an opportunity to terminate their participation at any time with no penalty, purpose of the research, description of procedures and length of time needed, full disclosure of any risks associated with the study and description of benefits from the research. Consent forms with sufficient information, comprehension and choice to volunteer was given to participants to sign. This is a communication process between the researcher and the participants that starts before the research begins and continues throughout the study (Mertens, 2014)

3.12.4 Confidentiality

Confidentiality was ensured by making certain that the data cannot be linked to individual participants by name; the information given cannot also be publicly disclosed. To ensure confidentiality, information collected from the participants was assessed by the researcher only, and no outsiders had an access to the participants' responses. Study codes were also used on the data documents for easy accessibility by the researcher only. After some months or a year, the questionnaires containing the responses would be properly disposed and destroyed (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013).

3.12.5 Protection from Harm

To ensure protection, the relationship between the researcher and the participants was based on honesty, trust and respect of their rights. There was no pressure to participate and ample time was given to them for the decision to participate, hence the researcher made sure that questions that were asked from the respondents did not expose them to any harm. Thus, this made them to freely respond to the questionnaire (Mertens, 2014).

3.12.6 Achieving Anonymity

To ensure anonymity, information collected from the research cannot be linked to participants' identities, and was not divulged to any other person in any form, except in cases where specific consent has been obtained. Therefore, no names, addresses

were collected from the participants; hence pseudonyms were used (Cohen *et al.*, 2013).

3.12.7 Maintaining Professionalism

This study met the requirements for research with human subjects and ensured that ethical and legal guidelines set by the National government were followed. As every researcher has an obligation to conduct his/her study in a manner that is consistent with professional guidelines, the researcher was also obliged to conduct this study in the same manner (Bebean, 2008)

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents data collected from the respondents in eight schools. The sample consisted of 112 principals/teachers (16 principals, 96 teachers) and 288 parents, but, after the data collection and vetting, 94 principals/teachers and 215 parents. Copies of the questionnaires were analysed and presented in this chapter.

4.1 Description of the study sample

Since it was not possible to reach out to all stakeholders in King William's Town District, a sample was taken from eight (8) selected schools in order to generalize the findings to a wider population. Fieldwork was done in eight selected schools with principal/teachers as well as fathers and mothers of learners in preschool and Grade R in the Foundation Phase in the King William's Town Education District of Buffalo Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province, Republic of South Africa, where stakeholders' views on engagement of fathers in early childhood provisioning and implications for policy and practice were investigated.

4. 2. Analysis of Demographic Data

Table 4.1: Age, Marital Status and Race of the Principals/Teachers

Variables	Freq.	%
AGE		
≤30	12	12.8
30yrs +	82	87.2
Total	94	100.0
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	61	64.9
Not Married	33	35.1
Total	94	100.0
RACE		
Black	66	70.2
White	3	3.2
Indian	4	4.3
Coloured	21	22.3
Total	94	100.0

Table 4.1 reveals that 94 principals/teachers were analysed in this study. The age distribution shows that the majority of them - 87% - were above 30years of age while only 13% were either 30 years old or below. In the case of marital status, the majority were married – 65%, while 35% were not married. Again, the largest proportion of teachers is Black teachers – 70%, 22% are Coloured, 4% are Indians and 3% are White teachers. Figure 1, 2 and 3 presents these data in a pie chart form.

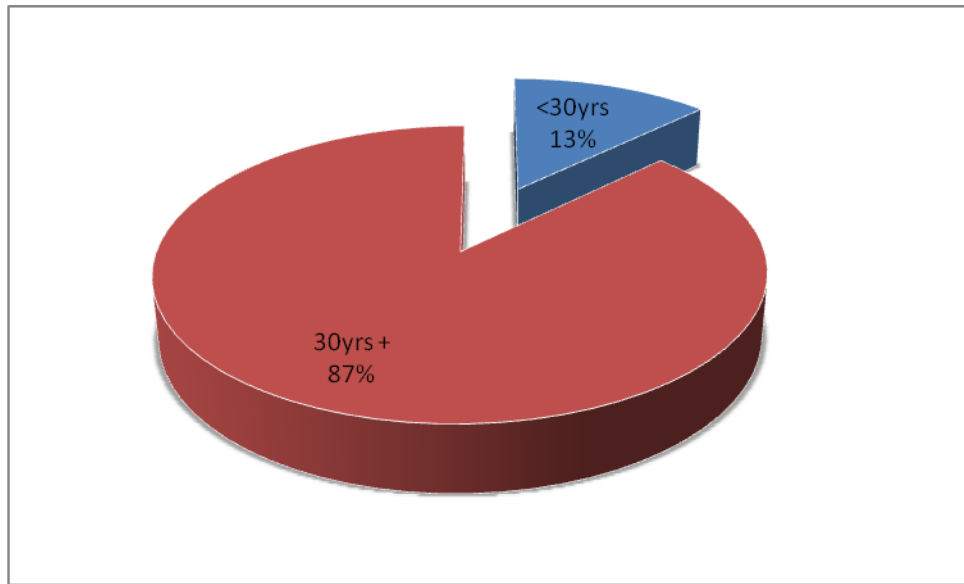


Fig. 4.1: Age Distribution of the Principals/teachers

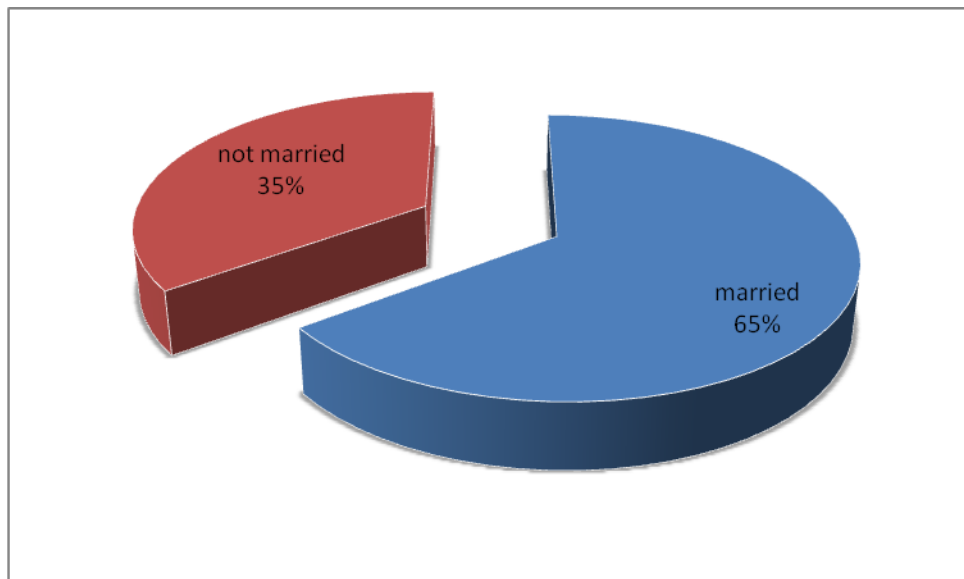


Fig. 4.2: Distribution of the Principals/Teachers Based on Marital Status

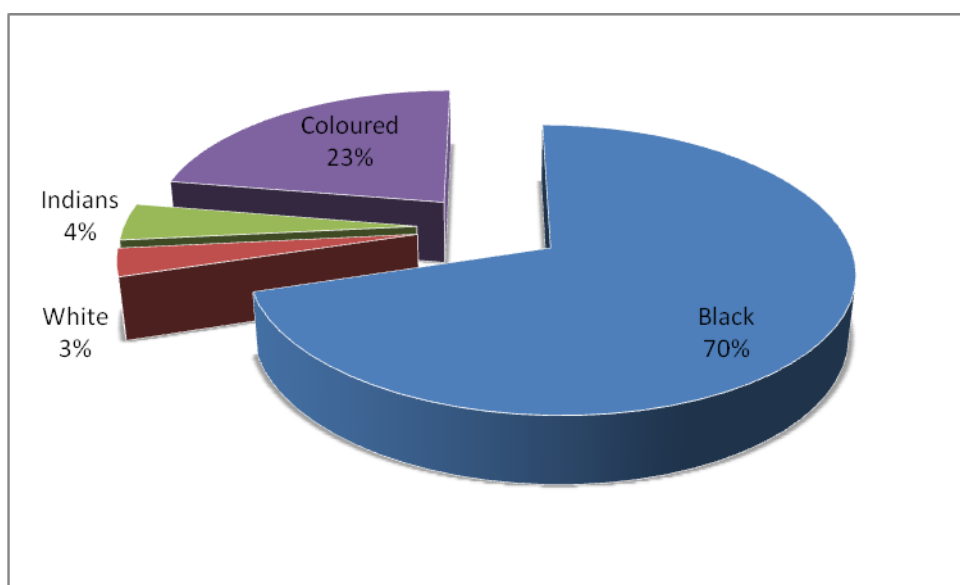


Fig. 4.3: Race Distribution of the Principals/Teachers

Table 4.2: Level of Education, Cadre and Working Experience of the Principals/Teachers

Variables	Freq.	%
LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
1 ST Degree +	22	23.4
Diploma	23	24.5
Technikon	1	1.1
Certificate	38	40.4
Matric	10	10.6
Total	94	100.0
CADRE		
Principals	13	13.8
Deputy/HODs	5	5.3
Teachers	76	80.9
Total	94	100.0
WORKING EXPERIENCE		
<1yr	3	3.2
1-5yrs	10	10.6
6-10yrs	16	17.0
11yrs+	65	69.1
Total	94	100.0

Table 4.2. shows the level of education of the principals/teachers and the majority had Certificates – 40% - followed by those with Diplomas – 25% -, those with 1st Degree and above made up 23%, 11% had only matric while 1% had Technical education.

The cadre distribution shows that 81% were post level 1 teachers, 14% were principals and 5% were either Deputy Principals or HODs.

Also, it is shown that 69% of the staff had over 10 years of teaching experience, 17% had from 6 to 10 years working experience, 11% had from 1 to 5 years of working experience and 3% had less than a year of working experience. Figure 4, 5 and 6 present these data in pie charts.

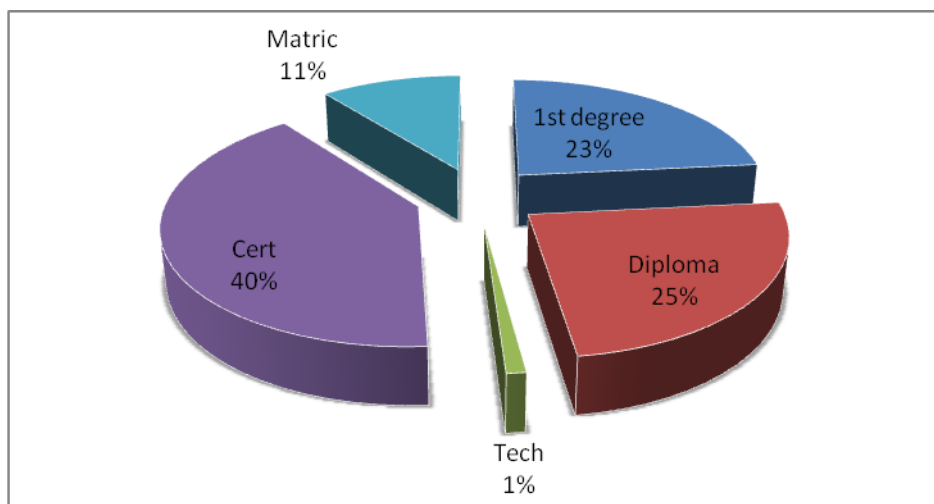


Fig. 4.4: Level of Education of the Staff

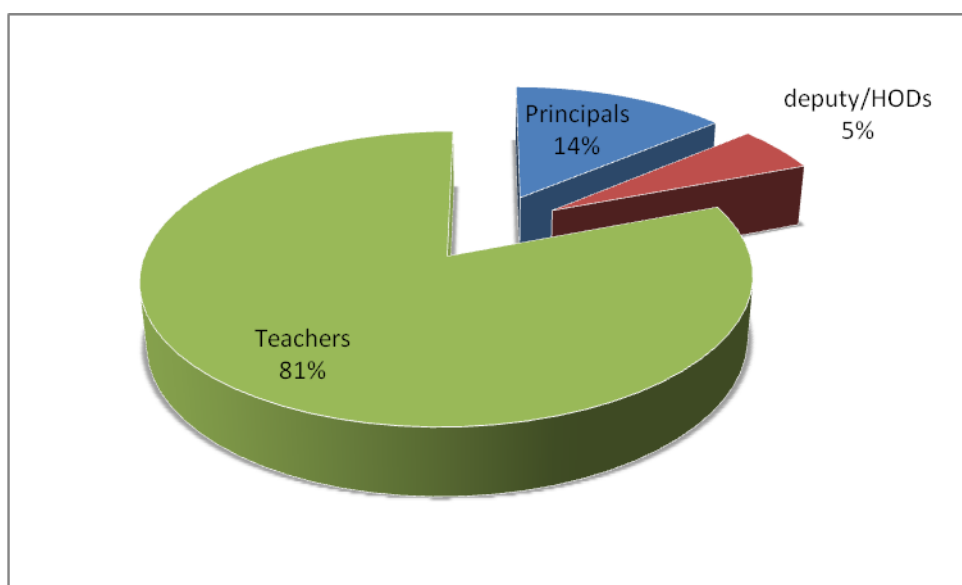


Fig. 4.5: Cadre distribution of the Staff

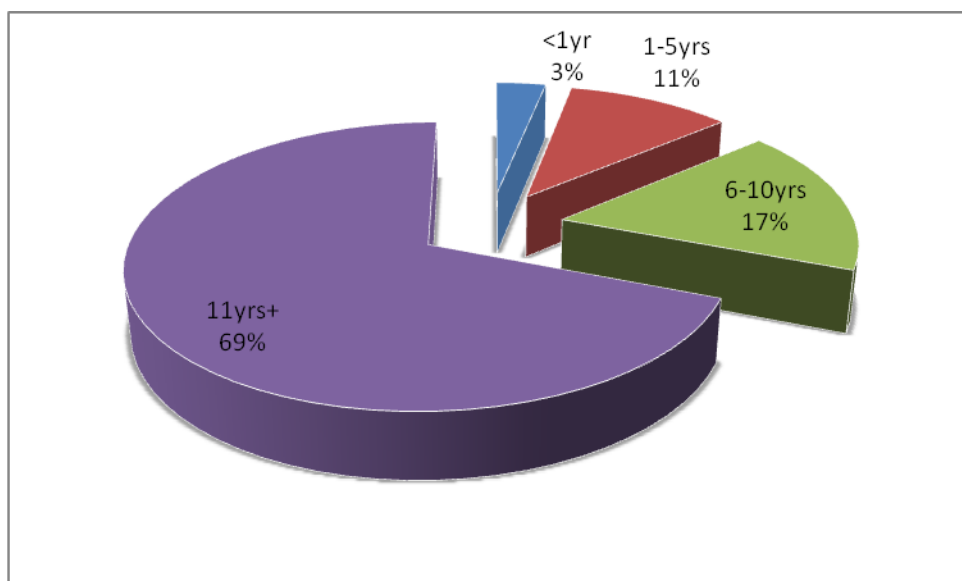


Fig. 4.6: Working Experience of the Staff

Table 4.3: Age, Marital Status and Race of the Fathers/Mothers

Variables	Freq.	%
AGE		
≤30	34	15.8
30yrs +	181	84.2
Total	215	100.0
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	128	59.5
Not Married	87	40.5
Total	215	100.0
RACE		
Black	187	87.0
White	-	0.0
Indian	-	0.0
Coloured	28	13.0
Total	215	100.0

Table 4.3 reveals that 215 fathers and mothers were analysed in this study. The age distribution shows that the majority of them - 84% - were above 30years of age while only 16% were either 30 years old or below. In the case of marital status, the majority were married – 60% -, while 40% were not married. Again, the table shows that Black parents constituted – 87%, followed by coloured 13%, while white and Indian parents were 0 percent. Figure 7, 8 and 9 presents these data in a pie chart form.

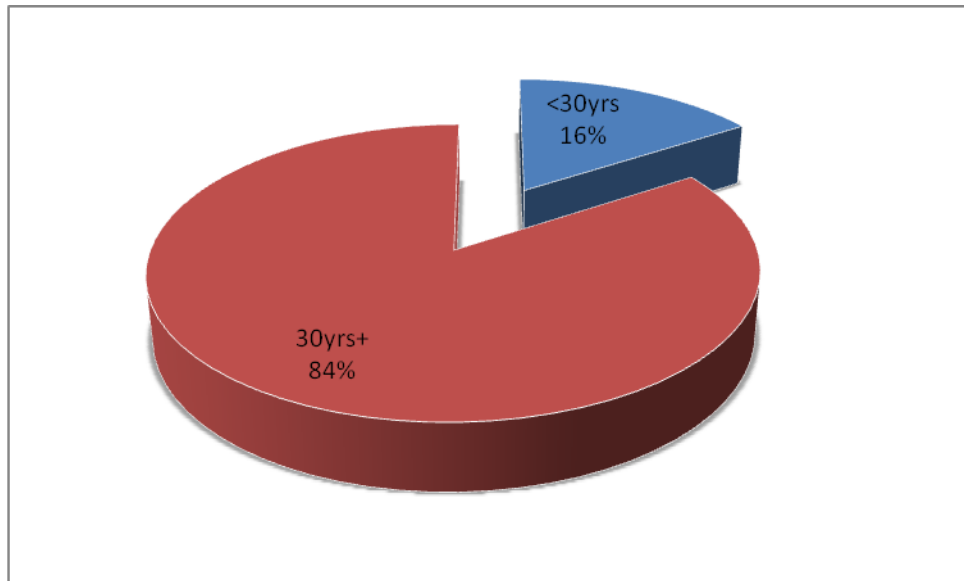


Fig. 4.7: Age Distribution of the Fathers and Mothers

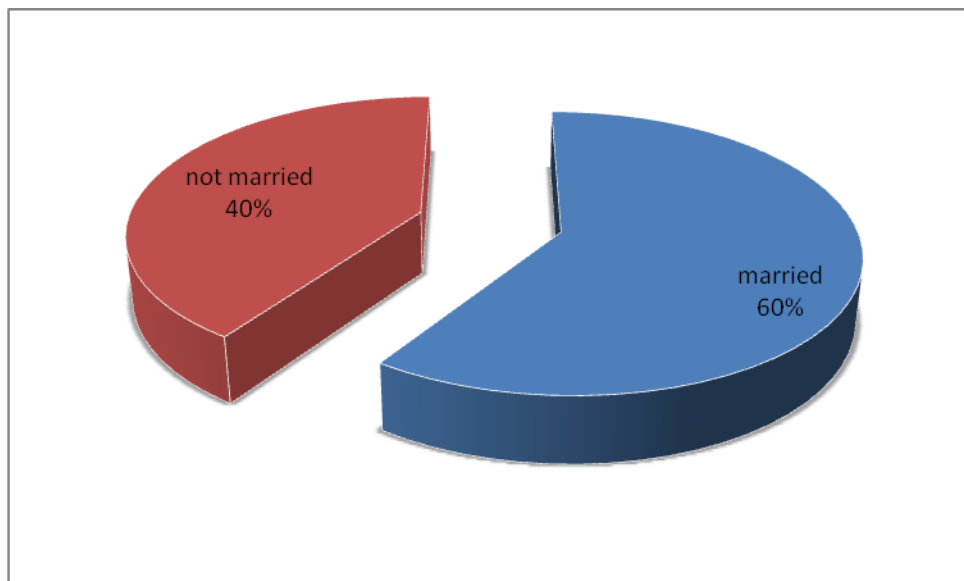


Fig. 4.8: Distribution of the Fathers and Mothers Based on Marital Status

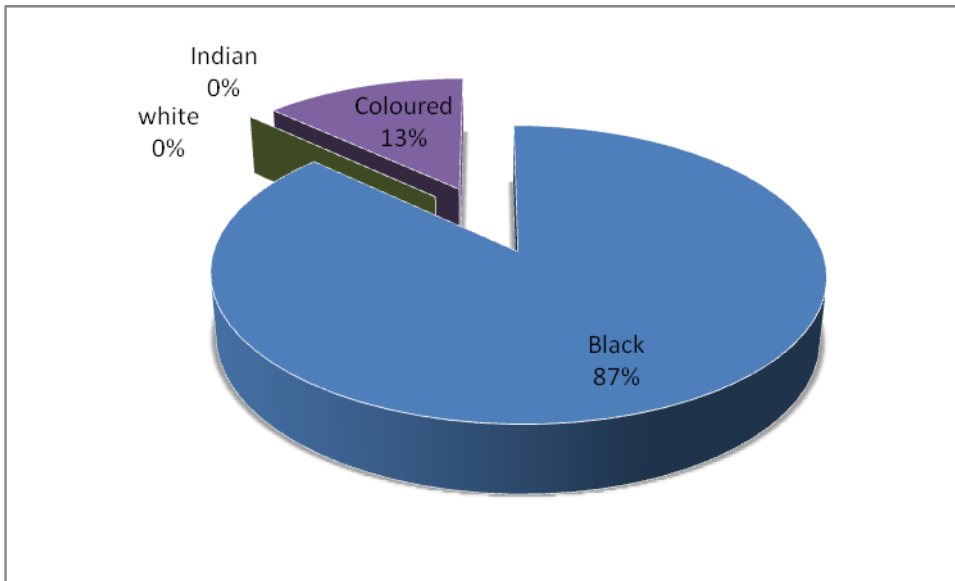


Fig. 4.9: Race Distribution of the Fathers and Mothers

Table 4.4: Level of Education, Occupation and Position of the Fathers and Mothers

Variables	Freq.	%
LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
1 ST Degree +	49	22.8
Diploma	55	25.6
Technikon	22	10.2
Certificate	45	20.9
Matric	44	20.9
Total	215	100.0
OCCUPATION		
Public workers	132	61.4
Self employed	47	21.9
Artisan	11	5.1
Unemployed	24	11.2
Total	215	100.0
POSITION		
Father	121	56.3
Mother	94	43.7
Total	215	100.0

Table 4.4 shows that 26% of the respondents obtained diploma certificates while 23% obtained first degrees. However, those who obtained certificate qualifications were shown to be 21%, those with Matric were 20%, while the least percentage of 10.2% were those who obtained technical certificates.

The table further reveals that the majority of the fathers/mothers (62%) are state employees, 22% are self-employed, 11% were unemployed and 5% are artisans.

More fathers - 56% - were involved while only 44% mothers were involved in the study. Figure 10, 11 and 12 presents these data in a pie chart form.

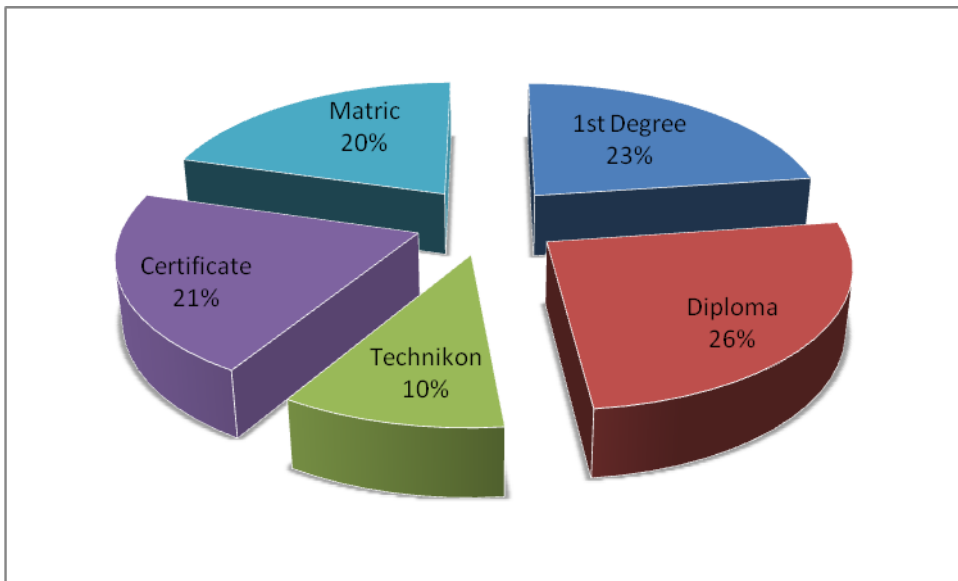


Fig. 4.10: Level of Education of the Fathers and Mothers.

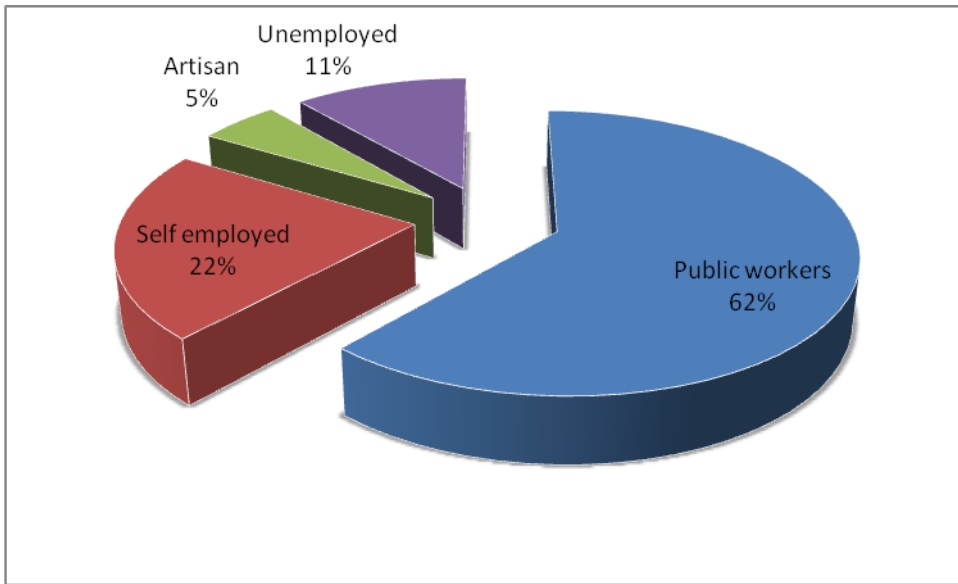


Figure 4.11: Occupational Distribution of the Fathers and Mothers

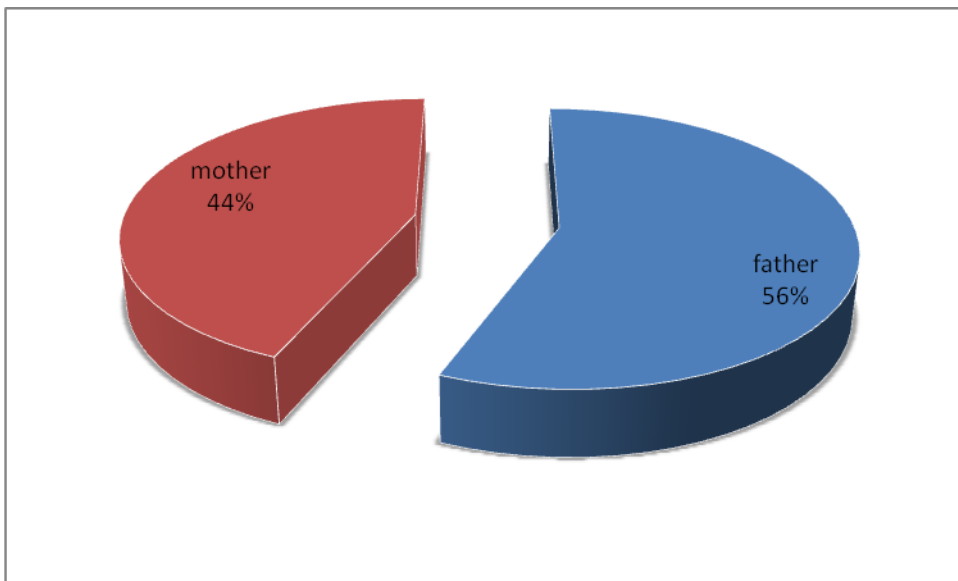


Figure 4.12: Position Distribution of Fathers and Mothers in the family

4.3 Answers to the Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are principals and teachers' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning?

Table 4.5: Principals/Teachers' Views on the Engagement of Fathers in ECCE Provisioning

S/N	ITEMS	N	mean	Std.D
1	Fathers should visit school to check their children's progress.	94	3.755	.432
2	Fathers should be interested in being a resource person in the classroom as a story reader.	94	2.936	.827
3	Fathers should be encouraged to share knowledge and skills with school's staff and children.	94	3.149	.718
4	Fathers should feel free to seek for assistance from the school for the child's education.	94	3.479	.744
5	Fathers are expected to have aspirations for their children's educational improvement.	94	3.457	.743
6	Fathers should have greater awareness of children educational progress.	94	3.596	.493
7	Fathers are expected to know about what the school is teaching the child.	94	3.426	.558
8	Fathers should perceive themselves as educators at home in their children's live.	94	3.532	.699
9	Fathers should establish and maintain on-going and productive	94	3.521	.563

	communication with school.			
10	Fathers should contribute to school aims/policies/procedures.	94	3.138	.934
11	Fathers should contribute to the progress of their children school.	94	3.404	.610
12	Fathers should use the opportunities during “drop off” and “pick up” time to know their child’s teacher.	94	3.117	.801
13	Fathers should encourage school visitation to the home.	94	2.745	1.005
14	Fathers should actively engage in school matters.	94	3.298	.760
15	Fathers in the school community are aware of their importance to be engaged in their children education.	94	3.149	.703
16	Fathers should appreciate being engaged in school’s activities.	94	3.351	.617
17	Fathers are expected to have the same vision for the child like that of the school.	94	3.255	.718
18	There should be mutual respect between fathers and school.	94	3.404	.610
19	Fathers are more aware of school aims and objectives.	94	2.936	.730
20	Fathers should develop good relationships with school’s staff.	94	3.170	.698
Weighted Average			3.294 (82.4%)	

Table 4.5 reveals that the principals/teachers strongly agreed with the following: that fathers should visit school to check their children’s progress (mean = 3.76), that the statement is positive and mean score indicate a strongly agreed; that Fathers should feel free to seek assistance from the school for the child’s education (mean = 3.48); that Fathers are expected to have aspirations for their children’s educational improvement (mean = 3.46); that Fathers should have greater awareness of children’s educational progress (mean = 3.60); that Fathers should perceive

themselves as educators at home in their children's live (mean = 3.53) and Fathers should establish and maintain on-going and productive communication with school (mean = 3.52).

They also agreed with the rest of the items, for instance, they agreed that a father should be interested in being a resource person in the classroom as a story reader (mean = 2.94); that fathers should be encouraged to share knowledge and skills with school's staff and children (mean = 3.15) and that fathers are expected to know about what the school is teaching the child (mean = 3.43).

The weighted average of Table 4.3.1 is 3.29, which can be rated as 82%. This implies that principal/teachers have positive views about fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning.

Research Question 2: What are fathers and mothers' views on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood care and education provisioning?

Table 4.6: Fathers' and Mothers' Views on the Engagement of Fathers in ECCE Provisioning

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	Std.D
1	One of a fathers' responsibilities is to monitor his child home works	215	3.428	.787
2	It is important for a father to ensure that his child attends school regularly and on time.	215	3.619	.622
3	Father took it as a must to assist his child in attempting the home	215	3.154	.927

	works.			
4	Fathers should always be ready to provide assistance for the child's home work.	215	3.144	.908
5	Reading to the children must form part of fathers' hobbies.	215	3.205	.714
6	Reading to the child by father is not a waste of time.	215	3.386	.752
7	Father's responsibility is to keep an eye on his child's progress.	215	3.456	.852
8	Fathers have responsibilities of discussing the importance of good education with their children all the time.	215	3.600	.594
9	Fathers should encourage the children to obey school policies be of good behaviour.	214	3.570	.515
10	Fathers should be happy to take children out for recreation activities during out-of-school period.	215	3.363	.554
11	Fathers should be aware that it is extremely important to attend parent's meeting at school.	215	3.479	.595
12	Fathers must ensure that their children have excellent attendance at schools.	215	3.451	.624
13	Fathers' responsibility is to provide/maintain clear rules at home for the children to obey.	215	3.488	.595
14	Fathers' responsibility is to spend more time caring for the children's physical and personal hygiene.	215	3.149	.841
15	It is boring for father to be playing with the children at home.	215	1.870	.977
16	Fathers' responsibility is to spend more time arranging and providing social activities for the children.	215	2.940	.724
17	Fathers' responsibility is to participate in parents' and families' social activities organized by the school.	215	3.181	.555
18	Fathers should know all it takes to assist the children in their education.	215	3.354	.701

19	Fathers must be responsible for the children's learning by providing for food and adequate time for sleep.	215	3.391	.667
20	Fathers' responsibility is to go to book store or a library to get books for the children.	215	3.279	.674
21	Fathers' responsibility is to provide learning resources at home for the children.	215	3.340	.711
22	Fathers' responsibility is to provide reading room/study where books or school materials are kept.	215	3.340	.605
23	Fathers' responsibility is to manage the children's physical and personal hygiene.	215	3.116	.663
Weighted Average		3,274	(81.85%)	

Table 4.6 reveals that the fathers and mothers strongly agreed with the following: that it is important for a father to ensure that his child attends school regularly and on time (mean = 3.62); fathers have responsibilities of discussing the importance of good education with their children all the time (mean = 3.60); that fathers should encourage the children to obey school policies and be of good behaviour (mean = 3.57); that fathers' responsibility is to provide/maintain clear rules at home for the children to obey (mean = 3.57); that fathers should be aware that it is extremely important to attend parents' meetings at school (mean = 3.56); and that a father's responsibility is to keep an eye on his child's progress (mean = 3.55).

They also agreed with the rest of the items, for instance, they agreed that one of a father's responsibilities is to monitor his child's home work (3.41); that reading to the child by a father is not a waste of time (mean = 3.40); that fathers should be happy to

take children out for recreation activities during out-of-school period (mean = 3.36) and that fathers' responsibility is to provide learning resources at home for the children (mean = 3.34).

The mean value (1.870) of item 15 indicated the negative response of the parents, which means that it is not boring for father to be playing with the child at home.

The weighted average of Table 4.3.2 is 3,274, which can be rated as 81.85%. This implies that fathers and mothers have positive views about fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning.

Research Question 3: Which support mechanisms are in place to encourage fathers' engagement in the early childhood care and education provisioning?

Table 4.7: Support Mechanisms Provided by Stakeholders that Encourages Fathers' Engagement.

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	Std.D	Decision
1.	Fathers support one another in their child's school.	215	2.670	.931	Mechanism
2.	Fathers do encourage one another towards attending school meetings and events.	215	2.842	.799	Mechanism

3.	Fathers do encourage and support workshops or training offered by their child's school.	215	2.870	.781	Mechanism
4.	Fathers do attend conferences organized by the school on roles of fathers to support children's education.	215	2.763	.888	Mechanism
5.	Fathers do support school financially and materially for children to go on field trips.	215	3.302	.708	Mechanism
6.	There is communication between home and school.	215	3.265	.797	Mechanism
7.	Conferences/Seminars are organized by the school for expected roles of fathers.	215	2.637	.885	Mechanism
8.	SGB meetings and other support groups' meetings are organized regularly by the school.	215	2.837	.818	Mechanism
9.	The principal and teachers are interested and cooperative when fathers discuss their child's issue.	215	3.130	.827	Mechanism
10.	School do welcome father's visitation.	215	3.256	.700	Mechanism
11.	Principal and Teachers pay attention to father's suggestions.	215	2.958	.963	Mechanism
12.	School staffs do organized social gatherings for fathers.	215	2.400	.990	Not a mechanism
13.	Fathers are invited to school on special event.	215	2.730	.960	Mechanism
14.	Principal and Teachers are keen on knowing children's fathers.	215	2.633	.981	Mechanism
15.	The school provides newsletter to seek	215	2.577	.849	Mechanism

	fathers' support and assistance.					
16.	Schools organize workshops/seminars for fathers to encourage their engagement.	215	2.288	.860	Not a mechanism	
17.	The schools seldom use phone communication for fathers regarding the child's progress.	215	2.409	1.032	Not a mechanism	
18.	Information given by the school to fathers should be concise and meaningful.	215	3.056	.889	Mechanism	
19.	Schools do provide a functional communication network system between home and school.	215	2.665	1.022	Mechanism	
20.	Schools do have separate programmes for working with fathers.	215	2.163	.895	Not a mechanism	
21.	There is a school social worker in schools for family support.	215	2.274	.904	Not a mechanism	
22.	Schools do make home visits.	215	2.167	.865	Not a mechanism	
23.	Schools do give "calendar of activities" to fathers.	215	2.381	.883	Not a mechanism	

Table 4.7 reveals that the stakeholders agreed with the following as the mechanisms put in place to encourage fathers' engagement: fathers support one another (mean = 3.00); that fathers encourage one another (mean = 3.04); that fathers do encourage and support workshops (mean = 3.00); that fathers do attend conferences (mean = 3.00); that fathers support schools financially and materially (mean = 3.30); that there

is a communication between home and school (mean = 3.27); that conferences/Seminars are organized by the school (mean = 3.04); that SGB meetings and other support groups' meetings are organized (mean = 3.04); that the principal and teachers are interested and cooperative when fathers discuss their child's issues (mean = 3.13); that school welcomes father's visitation (mean = 3.27); that principal and teachers pay attention to father's suggestions (mean = 3.00); that fathers are invited to school on special events (mean = 3.03); that principal and teachers are keen on knowing children's fathers (mean = 3.03); that the schools provide newsletters to seek fathers' support and assistance (mean = 3.00); that information given by the school to fathers should be concise and meaningful (mean = 3.01); and schools do provide a functional communication network system between home and school.(mean= 3.00). That the statements are positive and the mean score indicate a strongly agreed response.

They also disagreed with the rest of the items that they are not a mechanism , for instance, they disagreed that school staff do organized social gatherings for fathers (mean = 2.40); that school organizes workshops/seminars for fathers (mean = 2.30); that the school's seldom use phone communication for fathers regarding the child's progress (mean = 2.40); that schools do have separate programmes for working with fathers (mean = 2.20); that there is a school social worker in schools for family support (mean = 2.30); that schools do make home visits (mean = 2.20); and that schools do give "calendar of activities" to fathers (mean = 2.40).

Research Question 4: What strategies are used by the schools to promote fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning?

Table 4.8: Strategies Provided by Schools to Promote Fathers' Engagement.

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	Std.D	Strategies
1.	Invitation of fathers, specifically, for meetings is one of the strategies the school used to get fathers involved.	94	2.979	.748	Strategy
2.	Consistent contacts with fathers when there are issues with their children make them involved.	94	3.117	.505	Strategy
3.	School rendering counselling service to fathers on ways of supporting their children works as a strategy to get them involved	94	2.489	1.134	Strategy
4.	The school provides home-school Liaison Officer as strategy to get fathers involved.	94	2.192	.919	Not a strategy
5.	The school encourages fathers to be involved in child's education.	94	3.255	.548	Strategy
6.	Frequent communication with fathers by the teachers about the child on school	94	2.883	.801	Strategy

	activities is used as a strategy to get fathers engaged.					
7.	Meetings are scheduled on regular basis to talk with fathers about problems or to gain information regarding child's education.	94	2.543	.876	Strategy	
8.	Story day events is a strategy used by the school to get fathers engaged.	94	2.181	.733	Not a strategy	
9.	The language of expression used in the school encourages fathers to participate the more.	94	2.606	.751	Strategy	
10.	The schools use motivational words to encourage fathers' involvement.	92	2.935	.589	Strategy	
11.	The school freely welcomes educational ideas from fathers as strategy used to get them involved.	94	3.128	.609	Strategy	
12.	The school seeks for resources from fathers for educational needs of the child.	94	3.021	.718	Strategy	
13.	The school encourages fathers to attend learners' programmes at school in the evening.	94	2.702	1.014	Strategy	
14.	School encourages teachers to visit fathers at home in order to motivate their involvement.	94	2.075	.846	Not a strategy	
15.	Wide ranges of opportunities are given to fathers to be engaged in school's related activities.	94	2.543	.876	Strategy	

16.	Direct communication is occasionally used by the school to get fathers involved.	94	2.904	.749	Strategy	
17.	The school website is created by the school for fathers to have easy access to school activities and programs.	94	2.404	1.051	Not a strategy	
18.	Schools ensure a sense of ownership by the fathers as a strategy to get them engaged.	94	2.468	.851	Strategy	
19.	School gives opportunities for fathers to share their challenges and successes as a strategy to get them engaged.	94	2.92	.599	Strategy	
20.	School invites fathers to have an open day with their children.	94	2.670	.795	Strategy	
21.	Dad and Lads group are organized by the school to get fathers engaged.	94	2.170	.698	Not a strategy	
22.	Home-School learning partnerships established by the school as a means of getting fathers engaged.	94	2.000	.904	Not a strategy	
23.	Friends-of-school society is established by the school for fathers as a strategy to get them engaged.	94	1.947	.872	Not a strategy	
24.	Training fathers as classroom assistants is done by the school to make fathers engaged.	94	1.968	.796	Not a strategy	

Table 4.8 reveals that the teachers agreed with the following as the strategies used to promote fathers' engagement: Invitation of fathers, specifically, for meetings (mean= 3.00); that consistent contacts with fathers when there are issues with their children (mean = 3.12); that school rendering counselling service to fathers on ways of supporting their children works (mean= 3.00); that the school encourages fathers to be involved in children's education (mean = 3.30); that frequent communication with fathers by the teachers (mean = 3.00); that meetings are scheduled on regular basis to talk with fathers (mean = 3.04); that the language of expression used in the school encourages fathers to participate the more (mean = 3.01); that the schools use motivational words to encourage fathers' involvement (mean = 3.04); that the school freely welcomes educational ideas from fathers (mean = 3.13); that the school seeks resources from fathers for educational needs of the child (mean = 3.02); that the school encourages fathers to attend learners' programmes at school in the evening (mean = 3.01); that wide ranges of opportunities are given to fathers to be engaged in school's related activities (mean = 3.04); that direct communication is occasionally used by the school to get fathers involved (mean = 3.01); that schools ensure a sense of ownership by fathers (mean = 3.00); that school gives opportunities for fathers to share their challenges and successes (mean = 3.02); and that school invites fathers to have an open day with their children (mean = 3.00).

They also disagreed with the rest of the items that are not seen as strategies, for instance, they disagreed that the school provides home-school Liaison Officer (mean

= 2.20); that story day events is a strategy used by the school to get fathers engaged (mean = 2.20); that school encourages teachers to visit fathers at home in order to motivate their involvement (mean = 2.10); that a school website is created by the school for fathers to have easy access to school activities and programmes (mean = 2.40); that Dad and Lads groups are organized by the school to get fathers engaged (mean = 2.20); that Home-School learning partnerships established by the school are a means of getting fathers engaged (mean = 2.00); that a Friends-of-school society is established by the school for fathers (mean = 2.00); and that training fathers as classroom assistants is done by the school to make fathers engaged (mean = 2.00).

Research Question 5: How can policy and practice in fatherhood initiatives motivate improvement in fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning?

Table 4.9: Policy and Practices in Fatherhood Initiatives.

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	Education policy on parents support worked out by the school encourages fathers' involvement.	94	2.904	.657	Agreed

2.	Education policy on parent as co-educators/caregivers encourages fathers' engagement.	94	2.936	.583	Agreed
3.	Government policy on family learning programme encourages fathers' involvement.	94	2.840	.766	Agreed
4.	Fathers have inputs into school policies.	94	2.543	.667	Agreed
5.	Fathers are aware of favourable policies for fathers' participation being placed on the education agenda by government.	94	2.426	.874	Disagreed
6.	Provision of language policy in school encourages fathers' engagement.	94	2.926	1.060	Agreed
7.	Fathers have knowledge of the school policies.	94	2.894	.823	Agreed
8.	School has written policies on fathers' engagement.	94	2.160	.943	Disagreed
9.	Fathers feel they have benefited from collaborative approach used by the school.	94	2.404	.976	Disagreed
10.	School, teachers and fathers are working together harmoniously.	94	2.904	.974	Agreed
11.	School goals are in line with the wishes of the fathers.	94	2.894	.836	Agreed
12.	Adequate support for fathers of children who have difficulty in their learning will encourage fathers' engagement.	94	2.872	.722	Agreed
13.	School is making fathers important encourages them to get involved.	94	2.957	.915	Agreed

14.	Skills and knowledge shared by the school encourages fathers' involvement.	94	3.032	.613	Agreed
15.	Practices that improve a sense of identity are priority for fathers.	94	2.575	.967	Agreed
16.	The school has clear and formidable rules that get fathers engaged.	94	2.383	.929	Disagreed
17.	The schools do visit the home at regular intervals.	94	2.011	.696	Disagreed
18.	The schools share good news about children.	94	3.021	.904	Agreed
19.	Fathers have a clear understanding of teachers' roles.	94	2.979	.829	Agreed
20.	Fathers are aware of home/school agreement regarding the education of their children.	94	2.468	.958	Agreed
21.	Fathers have adequate knowledge on their rights and responsibilities towards their children's education.	94	2.862	.899	Agreed
22.	Adequate creation of awareness on needs of fathers by the school will encourage fathers' engagement.	94	3.128	.845	Agreed

Table 4.9 reveals that the teachers agreed that the following policies and practices motivate fatherhood initiatives: Education policy on parents support worked out by the school encourages father's involvement (mean = 3.00); that education policy on parent as co-educators/caregivers encourages fathers' engagement (mean = 3.04); that government policy on family learning programme encourages fathers'

involvement (mean = 3.04); that fathers have inputs into school policies (mean = 3.04); that the provision of language policy in school encourages fathers' engagement (mean = 3.03); that fathers have knowledge of the school policies (mean = 3.00); that practices of school, teachers and fathers are working together harmoniously (mean = 3.00); that the practices of school goals are in line with the wishes of the fathers (mean = 3.00); that the practices of adequate support for fathers of children who have difficulty in their learning will encourage fathers' engagement (mean = 3.00); that school practice makes fathers important (mean = 3.00); school practice on skills and knowledge sharing (mean= 3.03); practices that improve sense of identity (mean= 3.00); that the practices of schools sharing good news about children (mean = 3.02); that fathers have clear understanding of teachers' roles (mean = 3.00); that fathers are aware of home/school agreement regarding the education of their children.(mean= 3.00); and adequate creation of awareness on needs of fathers by the school will encourage fathers' engagement (mean = 3.13).

They disagreed with the rest of the items, mentioning that there are not policies and practices in the schools that motivate fatherhood initiatives, for instance, they disagreed that fathers are aware of favourable policies for fathers' participation being placed on education by government (mean = 2.43); that school has written policies on fathers' engagement (mean = 2.20); that fathers feel that they have benefited from the collaborative approach used by the school (mean = 2.40); that the school has

clear and formidable rules that get fathers engaged (mean = 2.40); and that the schools do visit the home at regular intervals (mean = 2.01).

4.4 Testing the Null Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of principals'/teachers' educational attainment on their views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

Table 4.10: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Showing Difference in Principals'/Teachers' Views Based on their Educational Attainment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig.	Remark
1st Degree +	22	67.5000	5.18927				
Diploma	23	67.3043	7.41886				Not
Technikon	1	70.0000	.	1.267	4, 89	.289	significant
Certificate	38	64.3158	7.53409				
Matric.	10	64.0000	7.46845				
Total	94	65.8191	7.05426				

Table 4.10 shows that there is no significant difference among principals/teachers with various educational attainments in their views about the engagement of fathers in ECCE provisioning ($F_{(4, 89)} = 1.27$; $p > 0.05$). This implies that principals'/teachers' educational attainment has no significant influence on their views. Therefore, H₀₁ is not rejected.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of principals/teachers' race on their views on engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

Table 4.11: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Showing Difference in Principal/Teachers' Views Based on their Race

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig.	Remark
Black	66	65.6515	6.81964	1.105	3,90	.351	Not Significant
White	3	73.0000	12.12436				
Indians	4	66.2500	9.10586				
Coloured	21	65.2381	6.70004				
Total	94	65.8191	7.05426				

Table 4.11 shows that there is no significant difference among principals/teachers of various races in their views about engagement of fathers in ECCE provisioning ($F_{(3,90)} = 1.11$; $p > 0.05$). This implies that principals/teachers' race has no significant influence on their views. Therefore, H₀₂ is not rejected.

H₀₃: There is no significant influence of fathers'/mothers' educational attainment on their views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

Table 4.12: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Showing Difference in Fathers'/mothers' Views Based on their Educational Attainment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	DF	Sig.	Remark
1st Degree +	49	76.4694	9.17901				
Diploma	55	78.2182	7.42291				
Technikon	22	76.2727	4.58966	6.377	4,209	.000	Significant
Certificate	45	74.4000	6.62777				
Matric.	43	70.8372	7.67783				
Total	214	75.3318	7.90776				

Table 4.12 shows that there is a significant difference among fathers/mothers with various educational attainments in their views about the engagement of fathers in ECCE provisioning ($F_{(4,209)} = 6.38$; $p < 0.05$). This implies that fathers/mothers' educational attainment has a significant influence on their views. Therefore, H_03 is rejected. The mean values show that fathers/mothers with Diploma certificates have the highest view mean score (78.22), followed by those with 1st Degree (76.47); followed by those with Technikon (76.27); followed by those with certificate (74.40) while those with matric have the least view mean score (70.84).

H₀₄: There is no significant influence of fathers'/mothers' race on their views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

This hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics because only two groups of race of the parents took part in the study.

Table 4.13: Summary of t-test Statistics Showing Difference between Black and Coloured Parents in their views

Variables	N	Mean	Std.D	t	df	Sig.	Remark
F&M VIEWS OF FATHERS ENGAGEMENT							
Black	186	75.113	8.219	-1.044	212	.298	Not
Coloured	28	76.786	5.287				Significa nt

Table 4.13 shows that there is no significant difference between Black and Coloured parents in their views about the engagement of fathers ($t = 1.04$; $df = 212$; $p > 0.05$). Therefore, H₀₄ is not rejected. This implies that the race of parents who took part in this study do not influence their views.

H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between school's strategies provision and engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

Table 4.14: Summary of Pearson Product-moment Correlation Showing Relationship between Views on School strategies and Fathers engagement

Variables	N	Mean	Std.D	r	Sig.	Remark
View about Engagement	94	65.8191	7.05426			
View about Strategy	94	61.8152	10.65537	.291	.005	Significant

Table 4.14 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between the views about the engagement of fathers and school strategies ($r = .29$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, H_05 is rejected. The positive relationship implies that better school strategies bring about better fathers' engagement.

H₀₆: There is no significant relationship between the support mechanisms put in place by schools and the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

Table 4.15: Summary of Pearson Product-moment Correlation Showing Relationship between Views on School Support mechanism and fathers' engagement

Variables	N	Mean	Std.D	r	Sig.	Remark
View about Engagement	94	65.8191	7.05426			
Support mechanism	94	63.0319	9.63356	.579	.000	Significant

Table 4.15 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between the views about the engagement of fathers and school support mechanisms ($r = .58$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, H_{06} is rejected. The positive relationship implies that better school support mechanisms bring about better fathers' engagement.

H₀₇: There is no significant relationship between the policy practice in fatherhood initiative motivation and the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

Table 4.16: Summary of Pearson Product-moment Correlation Showing Relationship between Views on School policy practice in fatherhood initiatives and fathers' engagement

Variables	N	Mean	Std.D	R	Sig.	Remark
View about Engagement	94	65.8191	7.05426			
View about Policy and practice	94	60.1170	12.12822	.351	.001	Significant

Table 4.16 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between views on school policy practice in fatherhood initiatives and fathers' engagement ($r = .35$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, H_{07} is rejected. The positive relationship implies that better school policy practice in fatherhood initiatives bring about better fathers' engagement.

4.5 Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis and interpretation done so far, the following are the summary of findings of this study:

1. Principals/teachers have the following views about fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning: fathers should visit school to check their children's progress; fathers should feel free to seek for assistance from the school for the child's education; fathers are expected to have aspirations for their children's educational improvement; fathers should have greater awareness of children's educational progress; fathers should perceive themselves as educators at home in their children's lives and fathers should establish and maintain on-going and productive communication with school. Others are that fathers should be interested in being resource persons in the classroom as story readers; fathers should be encouraged to share knowledge and skills with school's staff and children and those fathers are expected to know about what the school is teaching the child.

2. Fathers and mothers have the following views about fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning: It is important for a father to ensure that his child attends school regularly and on time; fathers have responsibilities of discussing the importance of good education with their children all the time; fathers should encourage the children to obey school policies and good behaviours; a father's responsibility is to provide/maintain clear rules at home for the children to obey; fathers should be aware that it is extremely important to attend parents' meeting at school; and a father's

responsibility is to keep an eye on his child's progress. Others are that one of a father's responsibilities is to monitor his child's home work; reading to the child by a father is not a waste of time; fathers should be happy to take children out for recreation activities during out-of-school period and a father's responsibility is to provide learning resources at home for the children.

3. The mechanisms put in place by the schools are: fathers support one another; fathers encourage one another; fathers do encourage and support workshops; fathers do attend conferences; fathers support school financially and materially; there is a communication channel between home and school; conferences/seminars are organized by the school; SGB meetings and other support groups' meetings are organized; interest and cooperation from principal/teachers when fathers discuss their child's issue; school welcomes father's visitation; principal and teachers pay attention to father's suggestions; fathers are invited to school on special event; principal and teachers feel interested in knowing children's fathers; the school provides a newsletter to seek fathers' support and assistance; information given by the school to fathers should be concise and meaningful; and schools do provide functional communication network system between home and school.

4. The strategies used by the teachers to promote fathers' engagement are: invitation of fathers, specifically for meetings; consistent contacts with fathers when there are issues with their children; school rendering counselling service to fathers as ways of supporting their children's work; the school encourages fathers to be involved in

child's education; frequent communication with fathers by the teachers; meetings are scheduled on a regular basis to talk with fathers; the language of expression used in the school encourages fathers to participate the more; the school uses motivational words to encourage fathers' involvement; the school freely welcomes educational ideas from fathers; the school seeks for resources from fathers for educational needs of the child; the school encourages fathers to attend learner's programmes at school in the evening; a wide range of opportunities are given to fathers to be engaged in school's related activities; direct communication is occasionally used by the school to get the fathers involved; schools ensure a sense of ownership by father; school gives opportunities for fathers to share their challenges and successes; and school invites fathers to have an open day with their children.

5. The policies and practices that motivate fatherhood initiatives are: education policy on parents-support-worker by the school; education policy on parent as co-educators/caregivers; government policy on family learning programme; fathers have inputs into school policies; provision of language policy in school; fathers have knowledge of the school policies. Identified practices of school are: teachers and fathers are working together harmoniously; the practices of school goals are in line with the wishes of the fathers; the practices of adequate support for fathers of children who have difficulty in their learning; school practice that makes fathers important; school practice on skills and knowledge sharing; practices that improve a

sense of identity; the practices of schools sharing good news about children and adequate creation of awareness on needs of fathers by the school.

6. Principals/teachers' educational attainment has no significant influence on their views on fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning.

7. Principals/teachers' race has no significant influence on their views on fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning.

8. Fathers/mothers' educational attainment has a significant influence on their views. Fathers/mothers with Diploma certificates have the highest view followed by those with 1st Degree, followed by those with Technikon, followed by those with certificates while those with matric have the least view about fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning.

9. The race of parents who took part in this study does not influence their views on fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning.

10. There is a significant positive relationship between the views about engagement of fathers and school strategies. The positive relationship implies that better school strategies bring about better father's engagement.

11. There is a significant positive relationship between the views about engagement of fathers and school support mechanism. The positive relationship implies that better school support mechanisms bring about better father's engagement.

12. There is a significant positive relationship between views on school policy practice in fatherhood initiatives and fathers' engagement. The positive relationship implies that better school policies and practices in fatherhood initiatives bring about better fathers' engagement.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter presents the stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning and implications for policy and practice, starting with the data that have emerged from the participants' responses to the questionnaire instrument administered by the researcher.

The research instruments used to extract information from the respondents were two questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered to the principals/teachers as well as fathers and mothers of learners in the Foundation Phase in eight selected schools in the King William's Town District of Buffalo Municipality of Eastern Cape, South Africa. The statistical methods used to analyse the data were descriptive and inferential statistics. With descriptive statistics, frequency tables were used to present nominal variables. The data were then represented graphically using pie charts. With inferential statistics, the mean, and standard deviation data were analysed using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis, of Variance and t-test, to test the

hypotheses measured at 0.05 levels of significance. The results were grouped into different tables of sixteen (16), showing results for each items and questions.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, and a discussion of the findings from the data collected, which are based on the literature review of the empirical studies of the research work provided. Conclusions are drawn from the research work, implications of the study. Recommendations are made for practice by the fathers and other stakeholders in education; then limitations on the study and finally, recommendations are made regarding areas for further research work.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The first research question sought the views of principal/teachers on the engagement of fathers in ECCE provisioning. The results reveal that principals/teachers have positive views on fathers' engagement. For instance, they argue that fathers should visit school to check their children's progress; fathers should feel free to seek for assistance from the school for the child's education; fathers are expected to have aspirations for their children's educational improvement; that fathers should have greater awareness of children's educational progress; fathers should perceive themselves as educators at home in their children's lives and fathers should establish and maintain on-going and productive communication with school. Others are that fathers should be keen on becoming resource persons in the

classroom as story readers; fathers should be encouraged to share knowledge and skills with school's staff and children and those fathers are expected to know about what the school is teaching the child.

This finding might be as a result of the fact that the principals/teachers are knowledgeable about the fact that African fathers cherish their children and like to educate them because children are seen as the future of the family (Burton & Osborne, 2014). It might also be as a result of the fact that these principals/teachers are parents that value education and can give whatever it takes to educate their children right from early year's stage.

This finding is consistent with Mncanca et al. (2016) in their study of black father participation that teachers have positive views on active engagement of fathers in the lives of their children by creating a conducive environment for them. More importantly, fathers show interest in being involved in the lives of their children if adequate and opportunities are given to them.

The second research question sought the views of fathers and mothers on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood education provisioning. The results indicate that fathers/mothers are of the view that it is important for a father to ensure that his child attends school regularly and on time; fathers have responsibilities of discussing the importance of good education with their children all the time; fathers should encourage the children to obey school policies and be of good behaviour; a father's responsibility is to provide/maintain clear rules at home for the children to

obey; fathers should be aware that it is extremely important to attend parents' meetings at school; and a father's responsibility is to keep an eye on his child's progress. Others are that one of fathers' responsibilities is to monitor his child's home work; reading to the child by a father is not a waste of time; fathers should be happy to take children out for recreation activities during out-of-school period; and a father's responsibility is to provide learning resources at home for the children. This implies that fathers and mothers have positive views about father's engagement in ECCE provisioning.

This finding might be seen as evidence of an overwhelming interest of parents to better the lives of their children. Most significantly, that children are the heritage of parents and that the education one gives to them as a parent will be their permanent inheritance which can never be taken away from them. Also, the positive views of fathers and mothers on fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning might be as result of a "father" being assumed to be the breadwinner and role model for the family. Hence, his contributions towards the upbringing of the children cannot be overlooked.

This study, therefore, concurs with previous research works such as that by Shears *et al.* (2011), Okeke (2014), Khewu & Adu (2015), Wilson (2015), Mathwasa & Okeke (2016) that the overwhelming positive influences of fathers in the lives of children result in high levels of improvement in Intelligent Quotient (IQ's), improvement in attendance rate, good interpersonal relationship with peers, moral values, high completion rates and the ability to continue learning. This finding also finds support in

other research evidence (Lamb, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Wilson, 2015; Clyde, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016) that fathers' engagement in the education of children results in greater children's educational outcomes.

To substantiate further, this is also in agreement with previous research evidence that the engagement of fathers in the education of their children helps bring about children's positive attitude towards learning, which results in an improved behaviour in school (Pleck, 2010; Huerta, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Higgins & Morley, 2014). To corroborate this submission, this study also argues strongly that when fathers are actively engaged in the education and lives of young children, either at home or at school, there is a greater level of improvement for children.

However, this finding contradicts the submissions of previous researchers, such as Khewu and Adu (2015), who submit that South African fathers, more especially Blacks fathers, do not engage or participate in the early education of their children.

The third research question sought the mechanisms put in place by the schools to encourage fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning. The result shows that fathers support one another; fathers encourage one another; fathers do encourage and support workshops; fathers do attend conferences; fathers support schools financially and materially; there is a line of communication between home and school; conferences/seminars are organized by the school; SGB meetings and other support groups' meetings are organized; the principal and teachers are interested and cooperative when fathers discuss their child's issues; school welcomes fathers'

visitations; principal and teachers pay attention to father's suggestions; fathers are invited to school on special events; principals and teachers are keen on knowing children's fathers; the school provides newsletters to seek fathers' support and assistance; information given by the school to fathers should be concise and meaningful; and schools do provide functional communication network systems between home and school. Others that are not viewed as a mechanism are that school staff do organize social gatherings for fathers; school organizes workshops/seminars for fathers; the schools seldom use phone communication for fathers regarding the child's progress; schools do have separate programmes for working with fathers; there is a school social worker in schools for family support; schools do make home visits; and schools do give "calendar of activities" to fathers.

The findings reveal that many schools have been experiencing a low engagement of fathers in the education of their children and these schools have been trying to improve this ugly situation. Again, it might be the response of many schools to the awareness campaigns and the publicity provided by different organizations to improve fathers' engagement in the education of their children.

This study, therefore, agreed with other research works (Pleck, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hopkins, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Clyde, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016) that in order to strengthen the active engagement of fathers in the lives of their children, appropriate mechanisms should be put in place by the schools. The following are some of the objectives to be achieved: lower

dropout rate, better attendance in school, psychological importance, sociological growth, emotional significance, physical and mental health enhancement, strong father-child-bond, better educational outcomes/children result, behavioural improvement, cognitive development outcomes, positive role modelling, ability to continue further in education/learning, and greater achievement as well as ultimate success in life.

The fourth research question sought the strategies that are used by the schools to promote fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning. The result indicates that the invitation of fathers, specifically for meetings; consistent contacts with fathers when there are issues with their children; school rendering counselling service to fathers on ways of supporting their children's work; the school encourages fathers to be involved in child's education; frequent communication with fathers by the teachers; meetings are scheduled on regular basis to talk with fathers; the language of expression used in the school encourages fathers to participate more; the school uses motivational words to encourage fathers' involvement; the school freely welcomes educational ideas from fathers; the school seeks for resources from fathers for educational needs of the child; the school encourages fathers to attend learners' programmes at school in the evening; a wide range of opportunities are given to fathers to be engaged in school's related activities; direct communication is occasionally used by the school to get fathers involved; schools ensure a sense of ownership by fathers; school gives opportunities for fathers to share their challenges

and successes; and school invites fathers to have an open day with their children. The respondents also suggested that others are not strategies, that the school provides home-school Liaison Officer; story day events is a strategy used by the school to get fathers engaged; school encourages teachers to visit fathers at home in order to motivate their involvement; school website is created by the school for fathers to have easy access to school activities and programmes; Dad and Lads group are organized by the school to get fathers engaged; Home-School learning partnerships established by the school is a means of getting fathers engaged; Friends-of-school society is established by the school for fathers; and training fathers as classroom assistants is done by the school to make fathers engaged.

This finding reveals a number of strategies which are used by the schools to promote fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning. This might be as a result of vested interest on the part of the schools to promote fathers' engagement in ECCE provisioning. More importantly, they too assumed the roles of parents with particular reference to fathers, who are seen as important figures in the lives of their children. Hence, there is need for the schools to use a number of strategies to promote fathers' engagement.

The study also agreed with previous research (Lumpkin, 2010; Bhise & Sonawata, 2013; Henrich, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016) which suggests a number of strategies that can encourage and promote effective parental involvement, with particular reference to fathers' engagement in the lives and

education of their children. These strategies include: parent-teacher games, school debate and speech days, parent-teacher association, recruitment of male workers, fathers' learning groups discussions.

There have been quite a number of studies that have revealed that parents, with particular reference to fathers, play a significant part in their children's educational development (Lamb, 2010; Pleck, 2010; Shears *et al.*, 2011; Bhise & Sonawat, 2013; Henrich, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Indeed, a father's role in the life of his children cannot be overlooked, since his active involvement contributes tremendously to the educational attainment and holistic development of children's lives (Hopkins, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

The fifth research question sought to explore how policies and practices motivate fatherhood initiatives. The result reveals that the Education policy on parents' support worked out by the school encourages father's involvement; education policy on parent as co-educators/caregivers encourages fathers' engagement; government policy on family learning programme encourages father's involvement; fathers have inputs into school policies; provision of language policy in school encourages fathers' engagement; fathers have knowledge of the school policies; teachers and fathers are working together harmoniously; the practices of school goals are in line with the wishes of the fathers; the practices of adequate support for fathers of children who have difficulty in their learning will encourage fathers' engagement; school practice

that makes fathers important; school practice on skills and knowledge sharing; practices that improve a sense of identity; the practices of schools sharing good news about children; fathers have clear understanding of teachers' roles; fathers have awareness of home/school agreement regarding the education of their children; and adequate creation of awareness on needs of the fathers by the school will encourage fathers' engagement. On the other hand, the results revealed that these are not policies and practices that motivate fatherhood initiatives, that fathers are aware of favourable policies for fathers' participation being placed on education by government; school has written policies on fathers' engagement; fathers feel that they have benefited from a collaborative approach used by the school; the school has clear and formidable rules that get fathers engaged; and the schools do visit the home at regular intervals.

The study findings are consistent with that of other studies (Ball, 2010; Fagan, 2012; Taguma *et al.*, 2012; Akbari & McCuaig, 2014) that, in the face of continuous low level, as well as lack of fathers' engagement in the lives of their children's early year education, most industrialized countries provide some specific policies and programmes aiming at fathers to actively and effectively engage in the lives of their children. The policies and programmes specifically target the promotion of the cognitive, verbal, literacy, and numeracy skills of young children to provide them with a fair start in early childhood to the adult lives. For example, in Canada: a Policy like 'First National and Aboriginal People' to back up a programme like 'Aboriginal Head

Start Urban and Northern Affairs' are all aiming at improving the early childhood education and care. It is also to support the parents with particular reference to fathers in taking active engagement in their children's lives (Akbari & McCuaig, 2014). Also, Potter *et al.* (2012) highlight that United Kingdom policy to get the fathers engaged in the lives and education of their children includes: The children Act (2006), The Gender Equity Duty (2007), and the 'Think Fathers' Campaign (2009).

The various country policies and specific programmes for fathers' engagement also target to develop the social and emotional competency of children in relation to their fathers. Moreover, the policies and systems of father specific programmes implemented in different countries differ greatly in coverage, intensity, quality, and probably influence, as was reported by various researchers (Ball, 2010; Ball & Wahedi, 2010; Promundo, 2010; Richter *et al.*, 2011; Alsumati, 2012; Huerta *et al.*, 2013, Parker, 2014; Potter *et al.*, 2012; Murti, 2012; CHILD FORUM, 2016; Higgins & Morley, 2014; Mishra, 2016; Robert & Nsamenang, 2014).

The first hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of principals/teachers' educational attainment on their views. It was found out that principals'/teachers' educational attainment has no significant influence on their views.

It might be that the cultural value attached to children and education supersedes the influence of education on these respondents. In Africa, non-educated adults also value education for their children. Therefore, it was not a surprise that low and highly

educated teachers have almost the same positive view about fathers' engagement in the ECCE provisioning of their children.

However, the finding agrees with that of numerous research which maintains that the positive engagement of fathers promotes better child well-being and outcomes in social, moral, psychological, physical and emotional well-being of children (Ball, 2010; Lamb, 2010; Pleck, 2010; Shears *et al.*, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Emerson *et al.*, 2012). Significantly, most recent studies (Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Mncanca & Okeke, 2015; Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016) all submitted that fathers' engagement in the early lives and education of their children has been documented to be relatively positive and of greater educational achievement.

The second hypothesis states that there is no significant difference among principals/teachers of various races in their views about the engagement of fathers in ECCE provisioning. It was found out that principals'/teachers' race has no significant influence on their views.

This might be explained by the notion that the importance of education and children's lives cut across all races and the value attached to this phenomenon is equal in all the races observed. Education plays a key role in the success and liberation of families from poverty, which is a view shared by all races. This explains further that principals/teachers, in spite of their racial differences, are of the same view that the

active engagement of fathers in the lives of their children will bring about a positive and holistic development of children's lives.

In other words, this finding agreed with other research works (Pleck, 2010; Huerta, 2013; Higgins & Morley, 2014; Okeke, 2014) that, when parents are involved in the early education of their children, they are more likely to be successful and perform better in academics.

The third hypothesis states that there is no significant difference among fathers/mothers with various educational attainments in their views about engagement of fathers in ECCE provisioning. The finding shows that fathers/mothers' educational attainment has a significant influence on their views.

It must be explained that the level of education of parents affected the meaning and interpretation given to some educational concepts involved in the measuring of their views. This present study corroborates with previous studies by Mufutau (2015); and Mufutau and Okeke (2016), which indicated that the level of education of parents has a significant influence on the engagement of fathers in early childhood education provisioning.

However, irrespective of their views, based on their level of education, fathers and mothers have positive views on the overwhelming active engagement of fathers in the lives of their children. Hence, the study agreed with other studies that the uniqueness of fathers' engagement in the education of their children cannot be

compared to mothers' engagement (Mncanca & Okeke, 2016). Not only that, fathers' engagement is significant and their engagement result in children's emotional, social, intellectual and physical growth (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015). In addition, the engagement of fathers to a child's wellbeing and educational improvement cannot fully be replaced (Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

The fourth hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between Black and Coloured parents in their views about the engagement of fathers. The findings show that the race of parents who took part in this study did not influence their views.

This explains further that the parents, irrespective of their races, are of the same views that the active engagement of fathers in the lives of their children will promote children's total upbringing and good citizenship. In other words, this finding agrees with other research (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Hopkins, 2013; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016) that the engagement of fathers in the lives and education of their children is seen as a good behaviour in the sense that it teaches self-control and socially appropriate behaviour, greater tolerance for stress and frustration.

The fifth hypothesis states that there is no significant positive relationship between the views about the engagement of fathers and school strategies put in place. Results, however, show that those schools that put many strategies in place have high regard of fathers' engagement, so a positive relationship exists.

This might be explained by the notion that the strategies help in shaping the perceptions and attitudes of the fathers/mothers and the principals/teachers about the engagement of fathers. It must have been seen that all the efforts to strategise and bring fathers on board to actively participate in the life of their children are a worthwhile exercise.

The study concurs with previous studies (Lumpkin, 2010; Bhise & Sonawat, 2013; Henrich, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016) that a number of strategies can be adopted to encourage and promote effective parental involvement with particular reference to fathers' engagement in the lives and education of their children.

This study is also consistent with the study of Clyde (2016), which submits that school should make fathers visible by including fathers in their plan for any school activities. Hence, any appropriate and convenient time that will make fathers attend the school activities should be considered.

The sixth hypothesis states that there is no significant positive relationship between the views about the engagement of fathers and school support mechanism. However, results indicate a positive relationship which is suggestive of schools with many mechanisms to engage fathers, improve the perceptions and views of all the stakeholders towards fathers' engagement.

The reason for the rejection might be as a result of the views that better school support mechanism brings about better fathers' engagement. Therefore, when fathers are supported with necessary mechanisms, their engagement might improve and this will benefit the children. Significantly, the school staffs include both parents; hence, there is adequate need to support fathers in the engagement of their children's early years' education.

This finding concurred with the finding of Henrich (2013) which shows that effective communication and up-to-date information about the various activities in school from the school staff to parents, particularly fathers, encouraged fathers to be involved in their children's lives. In the UK, the Head start programme, cellular phones and texting were introduced in support of existing home visiting as a means to involve fathers in childhood education and care of their children. This yielded positive results for parental engagement, with particular reference to fathers, and improved completion rates among children was achieved and communication between the teachers and parents is highly effective (Henrich, 2013).

To shed more light on this, special day events such as the one suggested by Fitzpatrick (2011) that an annual event like "Dad Night Event", could be organised. In this event, children could draw the portraits of their fathers, write down individual stories concerning their fathers and prepare some special songs. On the night of the event, fathers and children relate for about 25 minutes in their classrooms, playing and completing a few special projects, then all the classes come together to engage

in an interactive “song fest” . This great event improves the engagement of fathers and makes them happy and likely to be engaged in their children’s lives (Fitzpatrick, 2011).

The seventh hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between the policy practices in fatherhood initiatives. However, the hypothesis was rejected. The rejection of this hypothesis might be due to the fact that better school policy practice in fatherhood initiatives brings about better fathers’ engagement. The stakeholders are of the view that functional policy and practice will most likely improve and encourage the engagement of fathers’ in the lives of their children.

This finding agrees with other numerous research (Ball, 2010; Alsumaiti, 2012; Parker, 2014; Porter *et al.*, 2012; Taguma *et al.*, 2012; Akbari & McCuaig, 2014; Parker, 2014), that good policy practice in fatherhood initiative will promote fathers’ engagement in the educational lives of their children. Various country policies and specific programmes for fathers’ engagement also aim to develop the social and emotional competency of children in relation to their fathers.

Moreover, the policies and systems of father specific programmes implemented in different countries differ greatly in coverage, intensity, quality, and probably have influence, as was reported by various research works (Ball, 2010; Ball & Wahedi, 2010; Promundo, 2010; Richter *et al.*, 2011; Alsumati, 2012; Huerta *et al.*, 2013, Parker, 2014; Potter *et al.*, 2012; Murti, 2012; CHILD FORUM, 2016; Higgins & Morley, 2014; Mishra, 2016; Robert & Nsamenang, 2014).

However, ECCE policy and programme implementation must strive to include and address the needs of children, as related to the fathers in strengthening the father to child relationship, without too much emphasis laid on the mother of the child alone. Both are special to the child, hence fathers should not be neglected when policies and programmes are formulated and implemented. Numerous research works emphasize the significance of fathers' involvement in the lives of children, as it affects the child positively, improves attendance at school, good interpersonal relationship with peers, emotional stability and enhances academic performance (Pleck, 2010; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Hall *et al.*, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016).

More significantly, the policy must ensure that more light is shed on the need to accommodate fathers, when policies are formulated and programmes are to be implemented, in an attempt to celebrate the successful participation of fathers in early development and education of their children, hence, emphasizing the potentials for creating sustainable change.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

This study reveals that stakeholders have positive views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning of their children.

Stakeholders are of the view that fathers should shoulder their responsibilities by discussing the importance of good education with their children.

It was observed that principals and teachers of schools were not a limiting factor to the engagement of fathers in the early education of their children, since there is a good relationship and communication between the schools and the fathers, as it was indicated in the finding. Hence, the conclusion drawn was that communication between the school and fathers was cordial, and, in terms of these relations, the majority of stakeholders see it as fathers' primary responsibility to attend SGB meetings and any other support programmes organized by the school.

Finally, it was concluded that a father's influence goes to the fourth generation after him. One thing that prevents a person from being a good father is that he has not completed being a responsible adult. For fathers to be in children's good memory tomorrow, fathers have to be in their lives today. Having children do not make a father, but being responsible in their lives does.

More importantly, an unstable father creates insecure children. A Stable father raises stable children. Children need affection (hugs, kisses), attention (listening) and affirmation (positive words) every day. When a father loves the mother of his children, it creates security and stability in the family. The best gift a father can give his children is to love their mother. Children learn how to handle feelings, failure and conflicts at home, when their father is always there for them.

Parenting, with particular reference to fatherhood obligation, can neither be delegated nor suspended for a while as fathers work for the ring of fame and fortune. The growth of children is irreversible, like a young tree, it takes the bend directed by the gardener, so is the life of a child. The life of children can never be shaped in adulthood; it can never be picked from where it was left after reaching the top in career pursuit. It is always easier to model young ones than to rehabilitate the grown up one.

Conclusively, if a father invests in his children, he needs not to invest for his children. Children require presence not present, no amount of gifts and meeting financial obligations can replace a father's presence in their lives. Any written will can be turned in a few years after the demise of the writer of the will. The only sure inheritance that a father can leave behind is the investment he makes in his children, not for his children. Thus, bringing out the best in their children, believing that the young one of today, if well trained and receives a better education, becomes a responsible citizen and a leader of the country.

5.3 Implications of the findings to educational practices

The empirical outcome of this study may be used as a basis of information for teachers and parents so that they would assist fathers with the positive engagement in the early childhood education of the child. Also, this research will have implications with reference to ECCE policy and practice that will enable the effective engagement

of fathers in the early childhood education of their children in Eastern Cape as well as in South Africa generally.

The findings show that principals and teachers have positive views that fathers could be involved in the early childhood care and education of their children; as a result, the schools are expecting more fatherly presence and the care of their children. Hence, they could be giving them the required opportunities to be actively involved.

The finding shows that fathers and mothers have positive views about fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning, so the parents are expecting more fatherly responsibilities if they could be enough opportunities to play their parts in the lives of their children. Also, the stakeholders have positive views about necessary support mechanisms and strategies that could be given to them to perform their fatherly roles. The finding reveals that the teachers agreed on good policies and practices to motivate fatherhood initiatives and improvement in fathers' engagement in early childhood care and education provisioning. As a result, good policies and practices in fatherhood initiatives bring about better fathers' engagement.

The findings of this study might equip fathers with the necessary information needed for them to play active roles in the lives of their children and provide necessary support for their optimal and holistic development. National and Provincial government as well NGOs might use the result of the study for futuristic plan programmes for fathers. Furthermore, teachers might have adequate knowledge on

how to assist the fathers and the policy will be guided by how to accommodate fathers in their provision of early education programmes.

Through this study, the Provincial Department of Education and National Department of Education will appreciate the necessity to decide and implement a good programme that will promote the effective engagement of fathers in the early childhood education of their children. The study will demonstrate the relationship that forms the child's environment and development between the "bio-ecological system theory" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), which will call attention to that of a child's own biology as a primary domain facilitating the child development. School and teachers should work to fortify the major relationship and create an environment that welcomes and promotes families. Society could campaign for policy that validates the significance of parental responsibility, particularly to fathers, in their children's development.

More importantly, this study will be able to enlighten the fathers on how likely it is to be engaged with various specific fathers in programmes in early childhood care and education. Note only that, the implication for the current study is to explore effective practice for engaging fathers in early childhood programmes and how fathers' engagement in childhood care and education programmes can lead to better children outcome as well. However, the evaluation and outcome of the current study is needed to better equip fathers, the stakeholders and society as a whole on how

significant it is to welcome and support fathers in all respects, since the positive engagement of fathers in their children's lives is linked to positive child outcome.

The current study is also premised upon the basis that fathers are to be their children's first teachers, devoting time each day to helping their children to learn. More importantly, educational practitioners must use every available resource and methods to make fathers engaged in their children's education and to let them realise that their engagement is very crucial and cannot be compared. Therefore, all stakeholders must promote partnerships that will increase fathers' engagement in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

In a similar vein, policies and programmes must also focus on fathers as well, not mainly on mothers. In other words, departments of government concerned in terms of early childhood education and care must make a concerted effort to include fathers in their programmes and policies. However, any new attention devoted to fathers is not and must not be intended to lessen the focus on the important roles that mothers play in their children's lives, but rather to highlight the fact that fathers are important too.

The significance of this study, therefore, is to reveal in greater detail how possible it is for fathers to be actively involved in their children's lives and to a good relationship with their children by promoting their holistic development. More significantly, fathers must come out of their traditional roles of being 'providers' alone, but assume

modern roles of being a provider, protector, promise maker, career, moral overseer, companion, disciplinarian and teacher, to mention but a few. Hence, the advent of urbanization and industrialization in the 20th century should redefine the roles of fathers.

In addition, there must be a shift in our society, once again transforming the roles of fathers. Greater forces that alter the roles of fathers and divorce as well as non-marital childbearing should be reduced if it cannot be avoided. Therefore, co-parenting should be strengthened. In addition to the above, fathers' engagement in children's education is higher if fathers have the necessary support and assurance that they can be of assistance to the child and that the child is capable of doing well in school, as well as having high educational aspirations, if father's are engaged in their lives. Not only that, the school policies and educational practitioners also had a strong influence on the level of fathers' engagement in their children's lives.

More importantly, in contributing to the existing body of knowledge and new knowledge generated, this study could assist towards informing change regarding where to improve regarding the engagement of fathers' in the lives of children in the early years of education. Also, this research might have implications with the reference to the ECCE policy and practice that will enable the effective engagement of fathers in the early childhood education of their children in Eastern Cape, as well as in South Africa generally.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Strategies to overcome challenges affecting fathers' engagement in ECCE

Studies have shown that father involvement is a factor that has a powerful influence on a child's education as well as improvement of active schools and is an indispensable condition for educational improvement and achievement (Pleck, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Higgins & Morley, 2014; Okeke, 2014; Mufutau, 2015; Wilson, 2015; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

Many studies suggest a number of strategies that can encourage and promote effective parental involvement with particular reference to fathers' engagement in the lives and education of their children (Lumpkin, 2010; Bhise & Sonawata, 2013; Henrich, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). These recent studies (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016) also suggest a number of strategies that can promote parental engagement with particular reference to fathers. These strategies include: parent-teacher games, school debate and speech days, parent-teacher association, recruitment of male workers and fathers' learning group discussions.

There have been quite a number of scholars in research that have revealed that parents, with particular reference to fathers, play a significant part in their children's educational development (Lamb, 2010; Pleck, 2010; Shears *et al.*, 2011; Bhise & Sonawat, 2013; Henrich, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015;

Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). However, a father's role in the life of his children cannot be overlooked, since his active involvement contributes tremendously in the educational attainment and holistic development of children's lives (Hopkins, 2013; Okeke, 2014; Khewu & Adu, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Mncanca & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

Notably, academic under-achievement is increased by lack of fathers' engagement in their children's lives (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Change, 2015; Mashiya *et al.*, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). In other words, an effective and functional father in the lives of his children is strongly connected to the positive educational outcomes and good moral behaviour as well as a high level of educational attainment. Therefore, to ensure high level of fathers' engagement in the lives and educational of their children, a number of strategies could be suggested to reduce challenges facing fathers' engagement in the lives and education of their children. To help fathers take an active roles and get involved with their children, means to convince them of the significance of their engagement, good interaction with their children, an interaction that may seem very insignificant to the fathers, but means a great deal to their children. The following strategies could be adopted to overcome their challenges in early childhood education and care (ECCE)

- a) Make fathers visible;
- b) Effective communication with fathers;
- c) Organise special events and start the year with a father-child event;

- d) Establishment of father-teacher reading group/Reading with the children;
- e) Establish a daily routine;
- f) Provide a dialogue-notebook or daily diary for children;
- g) Parent-teacher meetings;
- h) Create father friendly environment;
- i) Provision of useful resources available to fathers;
- j) Implementation of educative programmes by the government.

(a) Make fathers visible

Research indicates that the dominance of female pre-school educator is not peculiar to South Africa but also in other nations (Mashiya, 2014). In order to ensure active engagement of fathers in the lives and education of their children, schools must ensure that they hire and recruit male volunteers to work for them; they must also employ males as educators in the foundation phase learning as opposed to the employment of female domination in the foundation phase learning. Petersen and Petker (2011) submit that teaching in Foundation Phase by male educators is perceived to be women's jobs generally regarded as 'nannies' and 'caregivers'.

As noted by Potter *et al.* (2012), in the ECCE teaching profession there is a reluctance to work with male by some female staff that appears to feel more comfortable relating with females than they want to do with male. However, the

traditional belief of males not being good caring and nurturing individuals must be erased from the memory.

Most importantly, photos or posters of children interacting with fathers can be hung in the school's strategic places, making sure the images of fathers capture nurturing or caring moments, and it is significant for fathers to view those pictures whenever they visit school. Clyde (2016) also submits that school should make fathers visible by including fathers in their plan for any school activities. Hence, any appropriate and convenient time that will make fathers attend the school activities should be considered.

b) Effective communication with fathers

Communication between home and school should be regular, two-way and meaningful. Hence, effective communication with fathers will enhance their engagement. The school must learn to direct all communication in the forms of texts messages or forming WhatsApp groups, e-mails, as well as letters to fathers (Henrich, 2013; Makgopa & Mokhele, 2013).

In the UK Head start programme, cellular phones and texting were introduced in support of existing home visiting as a strategy to involve fathers in childhood education and care of their children. This yielded positive results for parental engagement, with particular reference to fathers and improved completion rates

among children; and communication between the teachers and parents is highly effective (Henrich, 2013).

Schools should make it a high priority to establish clear communication channels between fathers and teachers. By using two ways communications, fathers will be well informed about the educational programmes in school as well as their children's educational programmes. Examples of effective communication could be any of the following:

- Positive phone calls, automated phone system messages, radio station announcements, television public service announcements.
- Effective use of print materials such as flyers, memos, banners, signs, door hangers, newsletters, post cards, monthly calendars, events, websites and web boards, text messaging, and e-mail messages.
- Formal and informal structures in place to encourage fathers to start communicating with school's principal and class teacher, such as: open lines of communication for receiving comments and suggestions, on-site suggestion boxes, parent phone call time.

c) Organise special events and start the year with a father-child event.

To motivate fathers in taking active engagement in the lives and education of their children, a special day event could be organised for them. This day event could be one or twice in a month, where diverse professionals will come to educate the fathers

and show them their jobs (Fitzpatrick, 2011). Such professionals would include: engineers of different fields, fire fighters, farmers; all come with simple equipment to educate the fathers on how to take active part in the lives of their children so that these children can also be like them. In addition, an inventor's days might also follow where collections of various items like broken radios, small appliances and machine could be presented. Fathers could be given tools and encouraged to form a father-child team to use tools to separate the machine, discuss the parts and then assemble a new one, among them a highly skilled father can be asked to be a leader in each team. Evidence from research work reveals that special events for fathers can also promote their engagement in the lives of their children (Fitzpatrick, 2011).

To shed more lights on this special day events, Fitzpatrick (2011) mentions that an annual event like "Dad Night Event" around which a preparation of the day could be organised. In this event, children could draw the portraits of their fathers, write down individual stories concerning their fathers and prepare some special songs. On the night of event, fathers and children relate for about 25 minutes in their classrooms, playing and completing a few special projects, then all the classes come together to engage in an interactive "song fest". This great event improves the engagement of fathers and makes them happy and likely to be engaged in their children's lives (Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Another strategy to overcome challenge of fathers is to start the year with a father child event that could also be in the beginning of each calendar year, events such as breakfast with fathers, evening game activities for fathers, where children will eat a

breakfast with their fathers and in the evening they play any kind of educational games with their fathers. Most importantly, Sheldon (2009) suggests that the involvement of fathers in the lives of their children could be volunteering at school by not just assisting with homework, as this greatly motivates their children to have positive attitudes towards learning. This is consistent with one of the Epstein's six frameworks, "volunteering", where schools can create chances by which fathers can be required to be engaged in their children's lives.

d) Establishment of father-teacher reading group/Reading with the children

Father-teacher reading groups could be adopted as a strategy to engage fathers in the lives of their children. Monthly reading activities/events could be organized by schools to get fathers engaged in their children's education (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Schools can make a lot of suggested topics and ask the fathers to choose from such topics. However, the planning group can select a topic for the first meeting, make copies of relevant resources, and ask a few questions to start the discussion. To make it fun for fathers, tea breaks could be incorporated (Okeke, 2014; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). More importantly, illiterate fathers must be given an opportunity to participate in oral discussion and storytelling to cater for their group.

Significantly, during the session, the teachers must follow up with a newsletter to share important views of the group's meeting with all the fathers. Extra copies must be given to the fathers who were interested but could not make it to the reading

group. More importantly, father-teacher groups can also help fathers to value the reading for their children at home. Research works indicate that children who come from reading orientated homes where fathers are good readers, are more likely to develop reading skills and have improved oral skills, as well as become academically sound (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009).

It is of great value and significance to bear in mind that both sensitivity and self-confidence are crucial than any specific skills in a father's conduct and power. However, sensitivity is critical to both involvement and closeness. The father to child interaction is the great determinant of the father's influence on a child's development and modification (Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Wilson, 2015). Fathers must be informed of the need to read with their children at home. The ability to read is known to be one of the most critical skills a child needs to be successful. In other words, the best way is for a father to serve as a model reader by reading to the child and children can read by themselves (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009). However, if the father cannot read the text, he can stimulate his children's imagination by telling stories using a picture book (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). In addition, he can ask other significant adults to read to the children or older ones to read to the younger one with his own supervision. Parker (2014) points out, "Read to kids" is a good programme organized for fathers to get them engaged in the lives of their children and to overcome the part of their challenges. This programme aims to reconnect fathers to children, it's a weekly programme over five weeks held in school libraries, fathers

read to their children, do a craft project, have some time together and relate with the child's teacher (Parker 2014).

e) Establish a daily routine

Fathers need to be informed about the importance of setting a time for homework to be done by their children, limiting the time to view TV wisely, not more than two hours in a day. Fathers must try to work with children on homework and special projects, guiding them through the steps involved and encouraging them along the way. Fathers do not need to have in-depth knowledge of a subject but can be supportive in working through play way methods in children's school work (Clyde, 2016).

f) Provision of “dialog note book or “daily diary” for children.

Teachers can provide note books kept in children's school bags and ask to show it to their fathers when they get home. These notebooks, kept in children's bags are an excellent way to send messages from school to home and from home back to school, regarding a child's progress. For fathers whose schedules do not allow for visits to the school, this offers them a way to get engaged, avoid feelings of guilt and share regular and timely feed-back regarding their children's education (Mishra, 2012).

g) Parent-teacher meetings.

Evidence from research study indicates that, for fathers to be actively involved in the lives of their children there is need for the establishment of parent-teacher

association (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). When fathers attend parent-teacher meetings, they should be included in the discussion. The discussion should not be teachers centred but fathers centred. In a reverse case, fathers feel as if they were the invisible figure, in effect, a "mother-teacher" meeting. A teacher's facial expression is a good sign of whether or not a father is being included. Does the school focus more attention on the mother during the meeting? Does the teacher's eye contact stay mostly with the mother? Not only that, do the coordinators of the meeting invite questions from the father as well as the mother? These are the questions that need to be considered during such meetings so as to create confidence and active engagement of fathers in the lives of their children. However, to make the meeting more welcome to fathers, images of fathers could be displayed in the meeting arena. Such images could be posters, photos and drawings on the walls of classrooms and hallways and these can send a powerful message to fathers about how they are welcome in the school. The school should find out what fathers want; one the most effective ways to involve fathers is to find out what interests them about their child's school or childcare programme and what they would like to contribute to the school.

h) Create a father friendly environment

There are many simple ways to make fathers feel welcome. These involve including fathers in parent/teacher conferences, after-school and extracurricular activities, in mentoring and tutoring activities and in making classroom presentations on careers

and the educational preparation needed for these careers (Okeke, 2014; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016). Holding specially designed support groups for fathers gives confidence to them to focus on common issues of importance to them. In addition, giving them a warm greeting during any school events and showing to them how important their presence for the occasion is and how glad the staffs are to see them.

More importantly, fathers love to hear good news about their children. Whether fathers are visiting school or a centre for regularly scheduled meetings, or because their child is having some particular problem, find something positive to say about their child's progress (Clyde, 2016). All fathers want to be acquainted with and not often hear that they are contributing to their children's education. If you recognize the contribution a father is making to his child's learning, he will be more likely to want to return (Mncanca et al., 2016).

Teachers must not miss out an opportunity to engage fathers, greet them with cheerfulness and, if possible, acknowledge their arrival in some unique way (Potter *et al.*, 2012). This view was also shared by Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) that good relationships must exist between the teachers and fathers. As a result, the teachers must be able to welcome fathers at all times and make the best opportunity by establishing parents and teachers' associations.

Teachers, can, for example, provide a short biography about him/her and their hobbies to fathers. Fathers seldom have opportunities during the "drop-off" and "pick-

up” time to get to know their child’s teacher and conversations during these brief encounters often focus on the events of the day. Sharing some particular details about school special activities and interests can reduce any anxiety and make fathers feel more welcome.

i) Provision of useful resources available to fathers

Some fathers will need reassurance and guidance about behaviour management while some will have interest in motor skills or language acquisition. A few will have questions about signs or risk of learning disabilities and others will want guidance about how to cultivate special skills and talents in their children. Teachers must be prepared to lead fathers to these and other types of resources, either through a leading library in the school, or any helpful resources such as books, videos, DVDs, pamphlets and websites. Guiding fathers to information about “sensitive” issues can help them to increase awareness of an important topic and even develop some level of acceptance, making it easier for them to partner with school and take positive action towards their engagement in the lives of their children.

j) Implementation of educative programmes by the government

In order to overcome the challenges facing fathers in their active engagement in the lives of their children, the policy makers may develop educational programmes, not only that but programmes that will ensure the totality of a viable and promising fatherly role in the lives of their children and society in general. Al-Sumaiti (2012)

emphasises that to encourage and ensure the best involvement of fathers in early years of their children, they must be introduced to different educational programmes that centre on the totality of child development regarding the active engagement of parents in their life, with particular reference to fathers.

Therefore, government leaders must come develop a comprehensive programme that covers parental engagement particularly targeting the fathers in the society. However, some programmes must cover the area of community development, health, education, sports and leadership and will aim at bringing the positive engagement of fathers. Most significantly, what is known is that father's roles can have both direct and indirect effects on children's development and adjustment. Declaration from various research works indicate that, where fathers are available and involved in the nurturing of their children, such children end up having better academic achievement (Guolaug, 2010; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016) and children with involved fathers have higher IQs (Okeke, 2014; Wilson, 2015; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016), less emotional stress (Fitzpatrick, 2011; Shears *et al.*, 2011; Khewu & Adu, 2015), improvement in behaviour, better relationship with peers, and ability to continue learning (Lamb, 2010; Pleck, 2010). In addition to any particular programme in which fathers maybe involved, there is a collective agreement by numerous research studies that there are numerous benefits in which fathers' engagement may be felt in the lives of their children than when they are absent (Pleck, 2010; Fitzpatrick, 2011; Bhise & Sonawat,

2013; Okeke, 2014; Change, 2015; Mufutau, 2015; Noel *et al.*, 2015; Clyde, 2016; Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016; Mufutau & Okeke, 2016).

As O'Brien (2011) suggests, in order to make fathers actively engage in the lives of their children, meaningful policies and programmes must be established and implemented effectively. In other words, policy makers must embark on strategies for the provision of adequate support for fathers who do not reside with their children due to the high rate of divorce (O'Brien, 2011). The author expatiates further that such separation and divorced programmes are quite necessary and important for non-residential fathering issues. Such programmes include advice services, dispute resolution, relationship support, mediation and parental support (O'Brien, 2011). However, such a programme is not limited to non-residence fathers alone, but also of high importance to residence fathers, since this will bring more time within the families.

Based on the finding of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. All stakeholders in children's education, that is, the community, academic and non-academic staff of schools, parents, NGOs, civil and social service workers, and media houses should be involved in the effective dissemination of information to fathers in order to bring the best out of them for positive participation in the lives of their children.

2. That the government in South Africa should advocate for ECCE policies that lay out concrete commitment and guidelines for fathers regarding their children's survival, development and, above all, educational achievements.
3. Symposia, lectures, workshops, and seminars should be organized for fathers of broken homes on how to be involved in their children's lives.
4. Finally, fathers should develop positive attitudes towards their children's lives as well as the educational provisioning of their young one. This will help make them to be more dependable fathers to their children.

5.5 Limitations on the study

Some respondents were reluctant to accept the questionnaires, claiming they were too busy. Therefore, some copies of the questionnaires were not returned; among those returned, some were not properly filled, thus resulting in missing information.

Some of the parents without post-high-school education might not really understand some of the educational concepts as well as measures in the scale, which must have negatively affected their response.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Study

However, this research work is grounds for further study, despite the results of this research work, for its time-to-time validity may change as a result of a dynamic world. The results from this study will serve as an important reference material for other

researchers who may want to carry out similar studies in the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Ethics Research Confidentiality and Informed Consent Form

Please note:

This form is to be completed by the researcher(s) as well as by the respondents before the commencement of the research. Copies of the signed form must be filed and kept on record

(To be adapted for individual circumstances/needs)

Our University of Fort Hare through the School of General and Continuing Education is asking you to answer some questions, which we hope will benefit your community and schools possibly others in the future.

The University of Fort Hare through the School of General and Continuing Education is conducting research regarding the "Stakeholders' views on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning: Implications for policy and practice". The researcher is interested in exploring the views of stakeholders on the engagement of fathers in the early childhood development of their children. The study is carried out to assist fathers to realize the importance of their engagement in the lives of their children. Given the fact that fathers were designed to head the families, the researcher is interested in finding out what strategies that can be used to help them engaged in their children's lives. Seeing that a huge number of children in South Africa do not live with their biological fathers, collectively as stakeholders' policies and programmes can be designed to encourage fathers in active engagement in the educational lives of their children.

Please understand that you are not being forced to take part in this study and the choice is yours alone whether to participate or not. However, we would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with us. If you choose not to take part in answering these questions, you will not be affected in any way. If you agree to participate, you may stop me at any time and tell me that you don't want to go on with the completion of the questionnaire. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will NOT be prejudiced in ANY way. Confidentiality will be observed professionally.

I will not be writing your name anywhere on the questionnaire and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researchers will have access to the unlinked information. The information will remain confidential and there will be no “come-backs” from the answers you give.

I would appreciate your open and honest responses to my questions. Some questions may be of a personal and/or sensitive nature. I will be asking some questions that you may not have thought about before, and which also involve thinking about the past or the future. We know that you cannot be absolutely certain about the answers to these questions but we ask that you try to think about these questions. When it comes to answering questions there are no right and wrong answers. When we ask questions about the future we are not interested in what you think the best thing would be to do, but what you think would actually happen.

If possible, our organization would like to come back to this area once we have completed our study to inform you and your school of what the results are and discuss our findings and proposals around the research and what this means for people in this area.

INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding stakeholders’ perspective of fathers’ engagement in the education of their children. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop my participation at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this questionnaire.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my school on the results of the completed research.

.....
Signature of participant

Date:.....

I hereby agree to the filling of questionnaire of my participation in the study

.....
Signature of participant

Date:.....

APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE COVER LETTER

No. 7

Raglan Street

K. W. T.

5600.

2017/01/04

The Chairperson

University Research Ethics Committee

Thru' Faculty Research Ethics Committee

University of Fort Hare.

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE COVER LETTER

I hereby apply for ethical clearance to enable the researcher to conduct research with principals/teachers, fathers/mothers at selected schools in King William's Town Education District.

The title for the study is "THE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION PROVISIONING IN ONE EDUCATION DISTRICT IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE."

All necessary documents in support of this application have been attached forthwith.

Thanks

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Mufutau Monsuru Atanda', with a large, stylized initial 'M' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

MUFUTAU MONSURU ATANDA

APPENDIX C: APPLICATION LETTER THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION

No. 7, Raglan Street

K. W. T. 5600.

2017/01/04

The Director

The Strategic Planning Policy Research

Department of Education

Zwelitsha

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON “THE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION PROVISIONING IN ONE EDUCATION DISTRICT IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE.”

I hereby request for permission, from your office, to conduct research on fathers' engagement at selected pre-schools. I am a Doctoral student at the University of Fort Hare and carrying out a research towards enlightening fathers on their engagement in the early years of their children.

The title of the study is **“The engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning in one education district in the Eastern Cape Province”**.

All necessary documents in support of this application have been attached forthwith.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mufutau, Monsuru Atanda', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MUFUTAU, MONSURU ATANDA

**APPENDIX D: APPLICATION LETTER THE KING WILLIAM'S TOWN DISTRICT
DIRECTOR**

Mufutau, Monsuru Atanda

7 Raglan Street

King William's Town

5600

April 25, 2017.

Cell no: 078 821 8695.

The District Director

Department of Education

King William's Town

5600

Eastern Cape

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO CONDUCT A THESIS RESEARCH

I am currently registered for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education with the University of Fort Hare. My academic research topic is titled "The engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education: Implications for policy and practice."

I humbly request your permission to distribute questionnaires in the following eight primary schools in the district:

1. xxxxxxxx Primary School, Schornville, K.W.T
2. xxxxxxxx Private School, Bryson Street, K.W.T.
3. xxxxxxxx Private School, 20 Queens Road, K.W.T.
4. xxxxxxxx Primary School, Albatross Avenue, K.W.T.
5. xxxxxxxx School, Durban Location, Peddie.
6. Xxxxxxxx Primary School, Peddie Extension, Peddie.
7. xxxxxxxxx Primary School, German Village, Peddie.
8. xxxxxxxxx Primary School, Mugababa Locaton, Peddie.

The questionnaires are meant for the principal/teachers and parents of learners, and seek to gather information on the above topic. All information elicited from the research will be treated as confidential, and anonymity is ensured.

I hereby attached the following documents with this letter:

- ✓ Ethical Clearance Certificate
- ✓ Approval from the Provincial Office Eastern Cape Department of Education.
- ✓ Copy of the letter to the Principal/Teachers of each School.
- ✓ Copy of letter to the parents.

I will be very much grateful for your approval and co-operation.

Thanks,

My Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mufutau M. A.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mufutau M A.

**APPENDIX E: PRINCIPAL AND TEACHERS' VIEWS ON ENGAGEMENT OF
FATHERS QUESTIONNAIRE (PTVQ)**

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE, EAST LONDON CAMPUS
EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA.
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this research is to gain information on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning. Your contribution is highly required by giving appropriate information to the questions asked below. You are assured of the confidentiality of the information given, as it is needed purely for academic purpose only.

INSTRUCTION:

Please tick (✓) and fill spaces provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

- 1. AGE:** ((a) less than 30 () (b) 30 years and above ().
- 2. MARITAL STATUS:** (a) Married () (b) Not Married ()
- 3. RACE:** (a) Black () (b) White () (c) Indian () (c)
Coloured ().

4. LEVEL OF EDUCATION: (a) First Degree and above () (b) Diploma ()

(c) Technicon () (d) Certificate () (e) Matric (). **5. Cadre:**

(a) Principal () (b) Teacher ().

6. Working Experience: (a) < 1year () (b) 1 – 5years () (c) 6 – 10years () (d) > 11years and above ()

SECTION B: PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOODCARE AND EDUCATION PROVISIONING.

Key: SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed).

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	Fathers should visit school to check their children's progress.				
2	Fathers should be interested in being resource persons in the classroom as story readers.				
3	Fathers should be encouraged to share knowledge and skills with school's staff and children.				
4	Fathers should feel free to seek for assistance from the school on the child's education.				
5	Fathers are expected to have aspirations for their children's educational improvement.				
6	Fathers should have greater awareness of children's educational progress.				

7	Fathers are expected to know about what the school is teaching the child.				
8	Fathers should perceive themselves as educators, at home, in their children's lives.				
9	Fathers should establish and maintain on-going and productive communication with schools.				
10	Fathers should contribute to school aims/policies/procedures.				
11	Fathers should contribute to the progress of their children at school.				
12	Fathers should use the opportunities during "drop off" and "pick up" time to know their child's teacher.				
13	Fathers should encourage school visitations to the home.				
14	Fathers should actively engage in school matters.				
15	Fathers in the school community are aware of the importance of their engagement in their children's education.				
16	Fathers should appreciate being engaged in school's activities.				
17	Fathers are expected to have the same vision for the child like that of the school.				
18	There should be mutual respect between fathers and school.				
19	Fathers are more aware of school aims and objectives.				

20	Fathers should develop good relationships with school's staff.				
----	--	--	--	--	--

SECTION C: SUPPORT MECHANISMS PROVIDED BY STAKEHOLDERS THAT ENCOURAGES FATHERS' ENGAGEMENT.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Fathers support one another in their child's school.				
2.	Fathers do encourage one another towards school meetings and events.				
3.	Fathers do encourage and support workshops or training offered by their child's school.				
4.	Fathers do attend conferences organized by the school on roles of fathers to support children's education.				
5.	Fathers do support schools financially and materially for children to go on field trips.				
6.	There is communication between home and school.				
7.	Conferences/Seminars are organized by the school for expected roles of fathers.				

8.	SGB meetings and other support groups' meetings are organized regularly by the school.				
9.	The principal and teachers are interested and cooperative when fathers discuss their child's issues.				
10.	Schools do welcome father's visitation.				
11.	Principal and Teachers pay attention to fathers' suggestions.				
12.	School staffs do organize social gatherings for fathers.				
13.	Fathers are invited to school on special events.				
14.	Principals and Teachers are keen on knowing children's fathers.				
15.	The school provides newsletters to seek fathers' support and assistance.				
16.	School organizes workshops/seminars for fathers to encourage their engagement.				
17.	The school seldom uses phone communication with fathers regarding the child's progress.				
18.	Information given by the school to fathers should be concise and meaningful.				
19.	School does provide functional communication				

	network system between home and school.				
20.	Schools do have separate programmes for working with fathers.				
21.	There is a school social worker in schools for family support.				
22.	Schools do make home visits.				
23.	Schools do give “calendar of activities” to fathers.				

SECTION D: STRATEGIES PROVIDED BY SCHOOLS TO PROMOTE FATHERS’ ENGAGEMENT.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Invitation of fathers specifically for meetings is one of the strategies the school used to get fathers involved.				
2.	Consistent contacts with fathers when there are issues with their children make them involved.				
3.	School rendering counselling service to fathers on ways of supporting their children works as a strategy to				

	get them involved				
4.	The school provides home-school Liaison Officer as strategy to get fathers involved.				
5.	The school encourages a father to be involved in child's education.				
6.	Frequent communication with fathers by the teachers about the child or school activities is used as a strategy to get fathers engaged.				
7.	Meetings are scheduled on regular basis to talk with fathers about problems or to gain information regarding child's education.				
8.	Story day events are a strategy used by the school to get fathers engaged.				
9.	The language of expression used in the school encourages fathers to participate the more.				
10.	The school uses motivational words to encourage fathers' involvement.				
11.	The school freely welcomes educational ideas from fathers as strategy used to get them involved.				
12.	The school seeks for resources from fathers for educational needs of the child.				

13.	The school encourages fathers to attend learners' programmes at school in the evening.				
14.	School encourages teachers to visit fathers at home in order to motivate their involvement.				
15.	A wide range of opportunities are given to fathers to be engaged in school's related activities.				
16.	Direct communication is occasionally used by the school to get fathers involved.				
17.	School website is created by the school for fathers to have easy access to school activities and programmes.				
18.	Schools ensure a sense of ownership by fathers as a strategy to get them engaged.				
19.	School gives opportunities for fathers to share their challenges and successes as a strategy to get them engaged.				
20.	School invites fathers to have an open day with their children.				
21.	Dad and Lads groups are organized by the school to get fathers engaged.				
22.	Home-School learning partnerships established by the school are a means of getting fathers engaged.				

23.	Friends-of-school society is established by the school for fathers as a strategy to get them engaged.				
24.	Training fathers as classroom assistants is done by the school to make fathers engaged.				

SECTION E: POLICY AND PRACTICE IN FATHERHOOD INITIATIVES.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Education policy on <i>parents supports work</i> by the school encourages father's involvement.				
2.	Education policy on <i>parent as co-educators/caregivers</i> encourages fathers' engagement.				
3.	Government policy on <i>family learning programme</i> encourages fathers' involvement.				
4	Fathers have inputs on <i>school policies</i> .				
5.	Fathers are aware of <i>favourable policies for fathers' participation</i> being placed on education by government.				
6	Provision of <i>language policy</i> in school encourages				

	fathers' engagement.				
7	Fathers have knowledge of the school policies.				
8.	The school has written policies on fathers' engagement.				
9.	Fathers benefit from the collaborative approach used by the school.				
10.	School, teachers and fathers are working together harmoniously.				
11.	School goals are in line with the wishes of the fathers.				
12.	Adequate support for fathers of children who have difficulty in their learning will encourage fathers' engagement.				
13.	School making fathers important encourages them to get involved.				
14.	Skills and knowledge shared by the school encourages fathers' involvement.				
15	Practices that improve sense of identity are a priority for fathers.				
16.	The school has clear and formidable rules that get fathers engaged.				
17.	The schools do visit the homes at regular intervals.				

18.	The schools share good news about children.				
19.	Fathers have clear understanding of teachers' roles.				
20.	Fathers have awareness of home/school agreement regarding the education of their children.				
21.	Fathers have adequate knowledge on their rights and responsibilities towards their children's education.				
22.	Adequate creation of awareness on needs of fathers by the school will encourage fathers' engagement.				

Thank you

APPENDIX F: FATHERS AND MOTHERS VIEWS ON ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS QUESTIONNAIRE (FMVQ)

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE, EAST LONDON CAMPUS

EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA.

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this research is to gain information on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning. Your contribution is highly required by giving appropriate information to the questions asked below. You are assured of the confidentiality of the information given, as they are needed purely for academic purpose only.

INSTRUCTION:

Please tick (✓) and fill spaces provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

1. **AGE:** (a) less than 30 () (b) 30 years and above ().
2. **MARITAL STATUS:** (a) Married () (b) Not Married ()
3. **RACE:** (a) Black () (b) White () (c) Indian () (c) Coloured ().

4. **LEVEL OF EDUCATION:** (a) First Degree and above () (b) Diploma ()
(c) Technikon () (d) Certificate () (e) Matric ().
5. **OCCUPATION:** (a) Public workers () (b) Self-employed () (c)
Artisan () (d) Unemployed ().
6. **Position** (a) Father () (b) Mother ()

SECTION B: FATHERS AND MOTHERS' VIEWS ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION PROVISIONING.

Key: SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed).

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	One of fathers' responsibilities is to monitor his child home works				
2	It is important for father to ensure that his child attends school regularly and on time.				
3	Fathers took it as a must to assist his children in attempting the home works.				
4	Fathers should always be ready to provide assistance for the child's home work.				
5	Reading to the children must form part of fathers' hobbies.				
6	Reading to the child by a father is not a waste of time.				

7	Father's responsibility is to keep an eye on his child progress.				
8	Fathers have responsibilities of discussing the importance of good education with their children all the time.				
9	Fathers should encourage the children to obey school policies and good behaviours.				
10	Fathers should be happy to take children out for recreation activities during out-of-school period.				
11	Fathers should be aware that it is extremely important to attend parent's meeting at school.				
12	Fathers must ensure that their children have excellent attendance at schools.				
13	Fathers' responsibility is to provide/maintain clear rules at home for the children to obey.				
14	Fathers' responsibility is to spend more time caring for the children's physical and personal hygiene.				
15	It is boring for fathers to be playing with the children at home.				
16	Fathers' responsibility is to spend more time arranging and providing social activities for the children.				
17	Fathers' responsibility is to participate in parents' and families' social activities organized by the school.				

18	Fathers should know all it takes to assist the children in their education.				
19	Fathers must be responsible for the children's learning by providing for food and adequate time for sleep.				
20	Fathers' responsibility is to go to book store or a library to get books for the children.				
21	Fathers' responsibility is to provide learning resources at home for the children.				
22	Fathers' responsibility is to provide reading room/study where books or school materials are kept.				
23	Fathers' responsibility is to manage the children's physical and personal hygiene.				

APPENDIX G: PRINCIPAL AND TEACHERS VIEWS ON ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS QUESTIONNAIRE (PTVQ)

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE, EAST LONDON CAMPUS
EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA.
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this research is to gain information on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning. Your contribution is highly required by giving appropriate information to the questions asked below. You are assured of the confidentiality of the information given, as they are needed purely for academic purpose only.

INSTRUCTION:

Please tick (✓) and fill spaces provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

1. AGE: ((a) less than 30 () (b) 30 years and above ().

2. MARITAL STATUS: (a) Married () (b) Not Married ()

3. RACE: (a) Black () (b) White () (c) Indian () (c) Coloured ().

4.LEVEL OF EDUCATION: (a) First Degree and above () (b) Diploma() (c)Technikon () (d) Certificate () (e) Matric ().

5. Cadre: (a) Principal () (b) Teacher ().

6. Working Experience: (a) < 1year () (b) 1 – 5years () (c) 6 – 10years () (d) > 11years and above ()

SECTION B: PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOODCARE AND EDUCATION PROVISIONING.

Key: SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed).

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	Std.D
1	Fathers should visit school to check their children's progress.	71	23	-	-	94	3.7553	.43220
2	Fathers should be interested to be resource persons in the classroom as story reader.	26	39	26	3	94	2.9362	.82708
3	Fathers should be encouraged to share knowledge and skills with school's staff and children.	29	52	12	1	94	3.1489	.71778
4	Fathers should feel free to seek for assistance from the school for the child's education.	53	37	2	2	94	3.4787	.74385
5	Fathers are expected to have aspirations for their children's educational improvement.	51	39	2	2	94	3.4574	.74292
6	Fathers should have greater awareness of children's educational progress.	56	38	-	-	94	3.5957	.49338
7	Fathers are expected to know about what the school is teaching the child.	43	48	3	-	94	3.4255	.55821
8	Fathers should perceive themselves as an educator at home in their children's lives.	59	28	5	2	94	3.5319	.69873
9	Fathers should establish and maintain on-going and productive communication with school.	52	39	3	-	94	3.5213	.56280
10	Fathers should contribute to school aims/policies/procedures.	34	49	5	4	94	3.1383	.93442
11	Fathers should contribute to the progress of their children school.	41	52	1	-	94	3.4043	.61029
12	Fathers should use the opportunities during "drop off" and "pick up" time to know their child's teacher.	32	45	13	4	94	3.1170	.80129
13	Fathers should encourage school visitation to the home.	22	40	20	12	94	2.7447	1.00468
14	Fathers should actively engage in school matters.	40	46	5	3	94	3.2979	.75960

15	Fathers in the school community are aware of the importance of their engagement in their children's education.	31	46	17	-	94	3.1489	.70264
16	Fathers should appreciate being engaged in school's activities.	37	55	1	1	94	3.3511	.61709
17	Fathers are expected to have the same vision for the child like that of the school.	37	46	9	2	94	3.2553	.71747
18	There should be mutual respect between fathers and school.	41	52	1	-	94	3.4043	.61029
19	Fathers are more aware of school aims and objectives.	19	52	22	1	94	2.9362	.73042
20	Fathers should develop good relationships with school's staff.	32	46	16	-	94	3.1702	.69774

SECTION C: SUPPORT MECHANISMS PROVIDED BY STAKEHOLDERS THAT ENCOURAGES FATHERS' ENGAGEMENT.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	Std.D
1.	Fathers support one another in their child's school.	20	30	37	7	94	2.6596	.92228
2.	Fathers do encourage one another towards school meetings and events.	15	39	25	15	94	2.5638	.96785
3.	Fathers do encourage and support workshops or training offered by their child's school.	12	33	41	8	94	2.5213	.82604
4.	Fathers do attend conferences organized by the school on roles of fathers to support children education.	15	36	30	13	94	2.5638	.92235
5.	Fathers do support school financially and materially for children to go on field trips.	24	42	27	1	94	2.9468	.76716
6.	There is communication between home and school.	29	52	12	1			

						94	3.1489	.71778
7.	Conferences/Seminars are organized by the school for expected roles of fathers.	16	35	36	7	94	2.6383	.85322
8.	SGB meetings and other support groups' meetings are organized regularly by the school.	26	49	16	3	94	3.0426	.76080
9.	The principal and teachers are interested and cooperative when fathers discuss their child's issue.	44	45	3	2	94	3.3936	.65939
10.	School do welcome fathers' visitation.	41	42	8	3	94	3.2553	.86678
11.	Principal and Teachers pay attention to father's suggestions.	41	46	4	3	94	3.3085	.79008
12.	School staffs do organized social gatherings for fathers.	16	28	43	7	94	2.5532	.88739
13.	Fathers are invited to school on special events.	27	36	23	8	94	2.8617	.95716
14.	Principal and Teachers feel interested in knowing children's fathers.	27	49	15	3	94	3.0426	.82846
15.	The school provides newsletter to seek fathers' support and assistance.	18	46	26	4	94	2.8085	.84595
16.	School organizes workshops/seminars for fathers to encourage their engagement.	13	37	39	5	94	2.6170	.79117
17.	The school' seldom use phone in communication with fathers regarding the child's progress.	11	29	49	5	94	2.4894	.77244
18.	Information given by the school to fathers should be concise and meaningful.	29	43	18	4	94	3.0319	.82243
19.	School provides functional communication network system between home and school.	25	21	44	4	94	2.7128	.91137
20.	Schools do have separate programmes for working with fathers.	4	7	74	9	94	2.0319	.66320

21.	There is a school social worker in schools for family support.	5	35	39	15	94	2.2872	.87526
22.	Schools do make home visits.	2	10	69	13	94	1.9894	.63066
23.	Schools do give “calendar of activities” to fathers.	8	45	33	8	94	2.5638	.76984

SECTION D: STRATEGIES PROVIDED BY SCHOOLS TO PROMOTE FATHERS’ ENGAGEMENT.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	Std.D
1.	Invitation of fathers specifically for meetings is one of the strategies the school used to get fathers involved.	23	48	21	2	94	2.9787	.74745
2.	Consistent contacts with fathers when there are issue with their children makes them involved.	18	69	7	-	94	3.1170	.50495
3.	School rendering counselling service to fathers on ways of supporting their children works as a strategy to get them involved	15	40	24	15	94	2.4894	1.13350
4.	The school provides home-school Liaison Officer as strategy to get fathers involved.	5	30	42	17	94	2.1915	.91905
5.	The school encourages fathers to be involved in child’s education.	29	60	5	-	94	3.2553	.54745
6.	Frequent communication with fathers by the teachers about the child or school activities is used as a strategy to get fathers engaged.	13	65	12	4	94	2.8830	.80129
7.	Meetings are scheduled on regular basis to talk with fathers about problems or to gain	12	36	40	6	94	2.5426	.87578

	information regarding child's education.							
8.	Story day events is a strategy used by the school to get fathers engaged	5	19	59	11	94	2.1809	.73269
9.	The language of expression used in the school encourages fathers to participate the more.	13	33	46	2	94	2.6064	.75089
10.	The school uses motivational words to encourage fathers' involvement.	13	60	19	2	94	2.9348	.58936
11.	The school freely welcomes educational ideas from fathers as strategy used to get them involved.	24	58	12	-	94	3.1277	.60879
12.	The school seeks for resources from fathers for educational needs of the child.	22	55	14	3	94	3.0213	.71810
13.	The school encourages fathers to attend learners' programmes at school in the evening.	20	40	24	10	94	2.7021	1.01420
14.	School encourages teachers to visit fathers at home in order to motivate their involvement.	5	18	54	17	94	2.0745	.84547
15.	Wide ranges of opportunities are given to fathers to be engaged in school's related activities.	13	34	40	7	94	2.5426	.87578
16.	Direct communication is occasionally used by the school to get fathers involved.	18	53	19	4	94	2.9043	.74875
17.	School website is created by the school for fathers to have easy access to school activities and programmes.	17	22	42	13	94	2.4043	1.05054
18.	Schools ensure a sense of ownership by fathers as a strategy to get them engaged.	9	35	45	5	94	2.4681	.85134
19.	School gives opportunities for fathers to share their challenges and successes as strategy to get them engaged.	12	63	18	1	94	2.9149	.59856
20.	School invites fathers to have an							

	open day with their children.	10	52	23	9	94	2.6702	.79499
21.	Dad and Lads groups are organized by the school to get fathers engaged.	4	19	61	10	94	2.1702	.69774
22.	Home-School learning partnerships established by the school are a means of getting fathers engaged.	3	24	42	25	94	2.0000	.90399
23.	Friends-of-school society is established by the school for fathers as a strategy to get them engaged.	2	21	47	24	94	1.9468	.87211
24.	Training fathers as classroom assistants is done by the school to make fathers engaged.	5	11	56	22	94	1.9681	.79585

SECTION E: POLICY AND PRACTICE IN FATHERHOOD INITIATIVES.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	Std.D
1.	Education policy on <i>parents support worker</i> by the school encourages fathers' involvement.	13	61	19	1	94	2.9043	.65696
2.	Education policy on <i>parent as co-educators/caregivers</i> encourages fathers' engagement.	10	70	13	1	94	2.9362	.58307
3.	Government policy on <i>family learning programme</i> encourages fathers' involvement.	15	53	24	2	94	2.8404	.76627
4	Fathers have inputs into <i>school policies</i> .	8	36	49	1	94	2.5426	.66664
5.	Fathers are aware of <i>favourable policies for fathers' participation</i> being placed on education by government.	10	33	39	12	94	2.4255	.87362
6	Provision of <i>language policy</i> in							

	school encourages fathers' engagement.	29	45	8	12	94	2.9255	1.05992
7	Fathers have knowledge of the school policies.	20	49	22	3	94	2.8936	.82264
8.	School has written policies on fathers' engagement.	10	15	54	15	94	2.1596	.94247
9.	Fathers feel they have benefited from collaborative approach used by the school.	9	39	32	14	94	2.4043	.97627
10.	School, teachers and fathers are working together With a lot of enthusiasm.	27	42	16	9	94	2.9043	.97351
11.	School goals are in line with the wishes of the fathers.	17	59	11	7	94	2.8936	.83561
12.	Adequate support for fathers of children who have difficulty in their learning will encourage fathers' engagement.	16	52	25	1	94	2.8723	.72192
13.	School making fathers important encourages them to get involved.	22	56	11	5	94	2.9574	.91481
14.	Skills and knowledge shared by the school encourages fathers' involvement.	16	67	10	1	94	3.0319	.61263
15	Practices that improve sense of identity are priority for fathers.	11	46	30	7	94	2.5745	.96709
16.	The school has clear and formidable rules that get fathers engaged.	11	29	42	12	94	2.3830	.92871
17.	The schools do visit the home at regular interval.	4	10	64	16	94	2.0106	.69553
18.	The schools share good news about children.	31	40	19	4	94	3.0213	.90374
19.	Fathers have clear understanding of teachers' roles.	23	52	15	4	94	2.9787	.82929
20.	Fathers have awareness of home/school agreement regarding the education of their children.	15	26	45	8	94	2.4681	.95829

21.	Fathers have adequate knowledge of their rights and responsibilities towards their children's education.	22	45	21	6	94	2.8617	.89924
22.	Adequate creation of awareness on needs of fathers by the school will encourage fathers' engagement.	34	42	16	2	94	3.1277	.84541

Thank you

APPENDIX H: FATHERS AND MOTHERS VIEWS ON ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS QUESTIONNAIRE (FMVQ)

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE, EAST LONDON CAMPUS
EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA.
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this research is to gain information on the engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education provisioning. Your contribution is highly required by giving appropriate information to the questions asked below. You are assured of the confidentiality of the information given, as they are needed purely for academic purpose only.

INSTRUCTION:

Please tick (✓) and fill spaces provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

7. **AGE:** (a) less than 30 () (b) 30 years and above ().
8. **MARITAL STATUS:** (a) Married () (b) Not Married ()
9. **RACE:** (a) Black () (b) White () (c) Indian () (c) Coloured ().
10. **LEVEL OF EDUCATION:** (a) First Degree and above () (b) Diploma () (c) Technikon () (d) Certificate () (e) Matric ().
11. **OCCUPATION:** (a) Public workers () (b) Self-employed () (c) Artisan () (d) Unemployed ().
12. **Position** (a) Father () (b) Mother ()

SECTION B: FATHERS AND MOTHERS' VIEWS ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOODCARE AND EDUCATION PROVISIONING.

Key: SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), D (Disagreed), SD (Strongly Disagreed).

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	Std.D
1	One of fathers' responsibilities is to monitor their children's home works	116	87	4	8	215	3.4279	.78726
2	It is important for a father to ensure that his child attends school regularly and on time.	143	66	4	2	215	3.6186	.62175
3	Father took it as a must to assist his child in attempting the home works.	91	82	30	12	215	3.1535	.92710
4	Fathers should always ready to provide assistance for the child's home work.	87	89	24	15	215	3.1442	.90824
5	Reading to the children must form part of fathers' hobbies.	74	118	16	7	215	3.2047	.71367
6	Reading to the child by a father is not a waste of time.	106	96	7	6	215	3.3860	.75181
7	Father's responsibility is to keep an eye on his child's progress.	125	79	3	8	215	3.4558	.85196
8	Fathers have responsibilities of discussing the importance of good education with their children all the time.	137	73	3	2	215	3.6000	.59437
9	Fathers should encourage the children to obey school policies and good behaviours.	124	88	2	1	215	3.5701	.51480
10	Fathers should be happy to take children out for recreation activities during out-of-school period.	86	121	8	-	215	3.3628	.55409
11	Fathers should be aware that it is extremely important to attend parent's meeting at school.	111	98	5	1	215	3.4791	.59459
12	Fathers must ensure that their children have excellent attendance at schools.	106	104	3	2	215	3.4512	.62367
13	Fathers' responsibility is to provide/maintain clear rules at home for the children to obey.	112	99	2	2	215	3.4884	.59484

14	Fathers' responsibility is to spend more time caring for the children's physical and personal hygiene.	75	112	17	11	215	3.1488	.84066
15	It is boring for a father to be playing with the children at home.	18	30	79	88	215	1.8698	.97720
16	Fathers' responsibility is to spend more time arranging and providing social activities for the children.	49	105	60	1	215	2.9395	.72413
17	Fathers' responsibility is to participate in parents' and families' social activities organized by the school.	56	142	17	-	215	3.1814	.55503
18	Fathers should know all it takes to assist the children in their education.	94	110	7	4	215	3.3535	.70092
19	Fathers must be responsible for the children's learning by providing for food and adequate time for sleep.	99	106	7	3	215	3.3907	.66691
20	Fathers' responsibility is to go to book store or a library to get books for the children.	84	110	18	3	215	3.2791	.67414
21	Fathers' responsibility is to provide learning resources at home for the children.	91	114	8	2	215	3.3395	.71111
22	Fathers' responsibility is to provide reading room/study where books or school materials are kept.	86	118	9	2	215	3.3395	.60455
23	Fathers' responsibility is to manage the children's physical and personal hygiene.	58	127	27	3	215	3.1163	.66309

SECTION C: SUPPORT MECHANISMS PROVIDED BY STAKEHOLDERS THAT ENCOURAGES FATHERS' ENGAGEMENT.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	Std.D
1.	Fathers support one another in their child's school.	35	106	44	30	215	2.6698	.93117

2.	Fathers do encourage one another towards school meetings and events.	36	125	40	14	215	2.8419	.79902
3.	Fathers do encourage and support workshops or training offered by their children's school.	39	120	48	8	215	2.8698	.78047
4.	Fathers do attend conferences organized by the school on roles of father to support children's education.	41	101	59	14	215	2.7628	.88840
5.	Fathers do support school financially and materially for children to go on field trips.	85	118	7	5	215	3.3023	.70826
6.	There is communication between home and school.	91	100	17	7	215	3.2651	.79686
7.	Conferences/Seminars are organized to empower fathers towards contributing to the school activities.	37	83	77	18	215	2.6372	.88524
8.	SGB meetings and other support groups' meetings are organized regularly by the school.	40	114	50	11	215	2.8372	.81831
9.	The principal and teachers are interested and cooperative when fathers discuss their child's issue.	73	109	25	8	215	3.1302	.82698
10.	School do welcome father's visitation.	77	123	11	4	215	3.2558	.70023
11.	Principal and Teachers pay attention to father's suggestions.	63	102	38	12	215	2.9581	.96340
12.	School staffs do organized social gatherings for fathers.	28	75	73	39	215	2.4000	.98967
13.	Fathers are invited to school on special event.	35	117	45	18	215	2.7302	.95788
14.	Principal and Teachers feel interested in knowing children's fathers.	41	90	49	35	215	2.6326	.98106
15.	The school provides							

	newsletter to seek fathers' support and assistance.	29	87	79	20	215	2.5767	.84964
16.	School organizes workshops/seminars for fathers to encourage their engagement.	16	69	93	37	215	2.2884	.85958
17.	The schools seldom use phone communication for fathers regarding the child's progress.	34	66	77	38	215	2.4093	1.03215
18.	Information given by the school to fathers should be concise and meaningful.	62	125	13	15	215	3.0558	.88953
19.	School provides functional communication network system between home and school.	53	65	76	21	215	2.6651	1.02284
20.	Schools do have separate programmes for working with fathers.	18	48	104	45	215	2.1628	.89469
21.	There is a school social worker in schools for family support.	23	53	102	37	215	2.2744	.90381
22.	Schools do make home visits.	17	46	112	40	215	2.1674	.86460
23.	Schools do give "calendar of activities" to fathers.	22	72	89	32	215	2.3814	.88266

SECTION D: STRATEGIES PROVIDED BY SCHOOLS TO PROMOTE FATHERS' ENGAGEMENT.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	Std.D
1.	Invitation of fathers specifically for meetings is one of the strategies the school used to get fathers involved.	53	55	92	15	215	2.6698	.94610
2.	Consistent contacts with fathers when there are issues							

	with their children makes them involved.	49	100	56	10	215	2.8605	.85329
3.	School rendering counselling service to fathers on ways of supporting their children works as a strategy to get them involved	34	76	85	20	215	2.5674	.88806
4.	The school provides home-school Liaison Officer as strategy to get fathers involved.	31	49	102	33	215	2.3488	.93937
5.	The school encourages fathers to be involved in child's education.	68	90	34	23	215	2.9163	1.01965
6.	Frequent communication with fathers by the teachers about the child or school activities is used as a strategy to get fathers engaged.	33	89	78	15	215	2.6605	.88131
7.	Meetings are scheduled on regular basis to talk with fathers about problems or to gain information regarding child's education.	36	72	87	20	215	2.5628	.90920
8.	Story day events is a strategy used by the school to get fathers engaged	10	67	111	26	215	2.2930	.87151
9.	The language of expression used in the school encourages fathers to participate the more.	27	27	39	16	215	2.7767	.80676
10.	The school uses motivational words to encourage fathers' involvement.	25	123	47	20	215	2.6791	.87770
11.	The school freely welcomes educational ideas from fathers as a strategy used to get them involved.	27	130	42	16	215	2.7581	.82435
12.	The school seeks for resources from fathers for educational needs of the child.	33	97	63	22	215	2.6233	.93849
13.	The school encourages fathers to attend learners' programmes at school in the							

	evening.	34	95	64	22	215	2.6279	.93287
14.	School invites fathers to have an open day with their children.	28	56	100	31	215	2.3349	.97129
15.	Wide ranges of opportunities are given to fathers to be engaged in school's related activities.	18	87	89	21	215	2.4605	.81863
16.	Direct communication is occasionally used by the school to get fathers involved.	31	63	108	13	215	2.4977	.86939
17.	School website is created by the school for fathers to have easy access to school activities and programs.	35	50	104	26	215	2.4186	.94307
18.	Schools ensure a sense of ownership by fathers as a strategy to get them engaged.	26	67	99	23	215	2.4279	.88242
19.	School gives opportunities for fathers to share their challenges and successes as a strategy to get them engaged.	40	85	66	24	215	2.6419	.94083
20.	School encourages teachers to visit fathers at home in order to motivate their involvement.	28	55	83	49	215	2.2698	.99615
21.	Dad and Lads group are organized by the school to get fathers engaged.	17	67	94	37	215	2.2791	.88406
22.	Home-School learning partnerships established by the school is a means of getting fathers engaged.	23	79	86	27	215	2.4465	.86774
23.	Friends-of-school society is established by the school for fathers as a strategy to get them engaged.	23	71	91	30	215	2.3953	.87913
24.	Training fathers as classroom assistants is done by the school to make fathers engaged.	21	67	74	53	215	2.2512	.95809

SECTION E: POLICY AND PRACTICE IN FATHERHOOD INITIATIVES.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	Std.D
1.	Education policy on <i>parents support worker</i> by the school encourages fathers' involvement.	51	72	77	15	215	2.7116	.96703
2.	Education policy on <i>parent as co-educators/caregivers</i> encourages fathers' engagement.	33	85	80	17	215	2.5907	.91708
3.	Government policy on <i>family learning programme</i> encourages fathers' involvement.	40	73	78	24	215	2.5349	1.05345
4.	Fathers have inputs into <i>school policies</i> .	28	83	71	33	215	2.4512	.99352
5.	Fathers are aware of <i>favourable policies for fathers' participation</i> being placed on education by government.	28	62	91	34	215	2.3581	.97017
6.	Provision of <i>language policy</i> in school encourages fathers' engagement.	43	85	70	17	215	2.6884	.94256
7.	Fathers have knowledge of the school policies.	29	79	82	25	215	2.4791	.96105
8.	School has written policies on fathers' engagement.	17	62	103	33	215	2.2465	.91696
9.	Fathers feel they have benefited from collaborative approach used by the school.	23	86	79	27	215	2.4558	.92051
10.	School, teachers and fathers are working together with enthusiasm.	31	83	83	18	215	2.5628	.90405
11.	School goals are in line with the wishes of the fathers.	41	96	63	15	215	2.7256	.92426
12.	Adequate support for fathers of children who have difficulty	33	84	77	21	215	2.5721	.92885

	in their learning will encourage fathers' engagement.							
13.	School making fathers important encourages them to get involved.	38	76	81	20	215	2.5814	.95781
14.	Skills and knowledge shared by the school encourages fathers' involvement.	28	80	89	18	215	2.5209	.89038
15	Practices that improve sense of identity are priority for fathers.	25	78	70	42	215	2.3488	1.02956
16.	The school has clear and formidable rules that get fathers engaged.	31	64	91	29	215	2.4233	.95820
17.	The schools do visit the home at regular intervals.	11	52	99	53	215	2.0651	.88889
18.	The schools share good news about children.	78	101	25	11	215	3.1116	.91540
19.	Fathers have clear understanding of teachers' roles.	37	79	70	29	215	2.5395	1.00794
20.	Fathers have awareness of home/school agreement regarding the education of their children.	38	88	57	32	215	2.5814	1.01467
21.	Fathers have adequate knowledge on their rights and responsibilities towards their children's education.	62	96	45	12	215	2.9349	.93999
22.	Adequate creation of awareness on needs of fathers by the school will encourage fathers' engagement.	110	69	26	10	215	3.2651	.95675

Thank you.

APPENDIX I: THE REQUIRED SAMPLE SIZE

Population Size	Confidence = 95%				Confidence = 99%			
	Margin of Error				Margin of Error			
	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	1.0%
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
20	19	20	20	20	19	20	20	20
30	28	29	29	30	29	29	30	30
50	44	47	48	50	47	48	49	50
75	63	69	72	74	67	71	73	75
100	80	89	94	99	87	93	96	99
150	108	126	137	148	122	135	142	149
200	132	160	177	196	154	174	186	198
250	152	190	215	244	182	211	229	246
300	169	217	251	291	207	246	270	295
400	196	265	318	384	250	309	348	391
500	217	306	377	475	285	365	421	485
600	234	340	432	565	315	416	490	579
700	248	370	481	653	341	462	554	672
800	260	396	526	739	363	503	615	763
1000	278	440	606	906	399	575	727	943
1200	291	474	674	1067	427	636	827	1119
1500	306	515	759	1297	460	712	959	1376
2000	322	563	869	1155	498	808	1141	1785
2500	333	597	952	1984	524	879	1288	21793

(Boyd, P. 2006)

APPENDIX J: LETTER TO THE SCHOOL

Mufutau Monsuru Atanda
7 Raglan Street
King William's Town, 5600
April 25, 2017.
Cell no: 078 821 8695.

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO DISTRIBUTE QUESTIONNAIRES TO PRINCIPAL/TEACHERS IN YOUR SCHOOL.

I am presently engaged in an academic thesis research entitled "The engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education: Implications for policy and practice".

The research is for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education

I hereby seek your permission to distribute questionnaires to principal/teachers in your school. I have compiled a questionnaire, to be filled by the principal/teachers, seeking to gather their views relating to the topic above.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Thanks,

My Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Mufutau M A.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mufutau M A.

APPENDIX K: LETTER TO THE PARENTS

7, Raglan Street,
King William's Town, 5600
April 25, 2017.

The Parents of the learner

Dear Parent,

REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH WORK

I am presently engaged in an academic thesis research titled: “The engagement of fathers in early childhood care and education: Implications for policy and practice”. The research is for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

I have compiled a questionnaire to be filled, specifically by parents of learners to gather their views relating to the above topic. In completion of the attached questionnaire, kindly note the following:

1. There is no right or wrong answer. The aim of the questionnaire is to get your own view with regards to the above topic.
2. All information provided will be treated confidentially and will only be used for the purposes of the study.
3. You have the right to withdraw or not to participate at any time during the study.
4. Please answer as openly as possible and give your own view and not that of other people.

Thank you for your maximum co-operation

My Regard



Mufutau M A

APPENDIX L: APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES

Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape
Private Bag X0032 • Bisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4773/4035/4537 • Fax: +27 (0)40 608 4574 • Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za

Enquiries: B Pamla

Email: babalwa.pamla@ecdoe.gov.za

Date: 08 May 2017

Mr. Monsuru Atanda Mufutau

University of Fort Hare

Bisho

Dear Mr. Mufutau

**PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE A DOCTORAL THESIS: THE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION PROVISIONING IN ONE EDUCATION DISTRICT
IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.
2. Your application to conduct the above mentioned research in eight selected schools under the jurisdiction of Buffalo City Education District of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:
 - a. this permission is granted for institutions under the jurisdiction of the Eastern Cape Department of Education, permission for preschools will be sought from relevant preschool owners and or Social Development;
 - b. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
 - c. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
 - d. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;
 - e. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;
 - f. the research may not be conducted during official contact time;
 - g. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;

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Page 1 of 2



Ikamva eliqumbileyo!

APPENDIX M: APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR
45 Eales Street, King William's Town, 5600, Private Bag X74445, KWT, 5600
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA, Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za

Tel: 043 6050 106

Email: lelethu.magele@edu.ecprov.gov.za

Mr M.A Mufutau

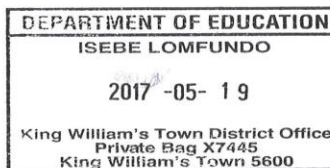
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/ Madam

1. This is to confirm that **Mr M.A Mufutau** is undergoing his **Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education** with the **University of Fort Hare**. He needs to do the research in the following schools:-
 - * **SCHORNVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL**
 - * **ST.CHRISTOPHERS SCHOOL**
 - * **SAINT THOMAS PRIVATE SCHOOL**
 - * **WESTBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL**
 - * **AYLIFF PRIMARY SCHOOL**
 - * **FEZEKA PRIMARY SCHOOL**
 - * **GERMAN VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**
 - * **MASIBAMBISANE COMBINED PRIMARY SCHOOL.**
2. The topic of this project is **"THE ENGAGEMENT OF FATHERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY & PRACTICE"**.
3. Kindly assist and co-operate with him in ensuring that this research is done and completed.
4. Thanking you in advance for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully


E. KLASSEN
DISTRICT DIRECTOR
BCM:EDUCATION DISTRICT



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APPENDIX N: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: OKE121SMUF01

Project title: **The engagement of father in Early Childhood Care and Education Provisioning on in Education District in the Eastern Cape Province.**

Nature of Project: PhD in Education

Principal Researcher: Monsuru Atanda Mufutau

Supervisor: Prof C.I.O Okeke

Co-supervisor: N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

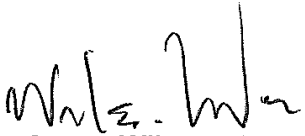
Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely


Professor Wilson Akpan
Acting Dean of Research

30 March 2017

APPENDIX O: CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE EDITING

EDITING/PROOFREADING CERTIFICATE

To whom it may concern

This serves to certify that I, Jabulani Mkhize, have proof-read and/or edited Mr Mufutau M. Atanda's PhD thesis to ensure that the language, grammar, punctuation and spelling are academically sound and appropriate, by rectifying errors, wherever these have been identified, and rephrasing sentences that would possibly make one lose sight of the flow of the argument.

Article Title: "The Engagement of Fathers in Early Childhood Provisioning in one Education District in the Eastern Cape"

Editor's Name: Jabulani Mkhize

Signature



Date : 6 August 2017

Contact Details: jmkhize@ufh.ac.za

Qualifications: PhD (English)

APPENDIX P: CERTIFICATE OF LANGUAGE RE-EDITING

EDITING/PROOFREADING CERTIFICATE

To whom it may concern

This serves to certify that I, Jabulani Mkhize, have proofread and/or edited Mr. M. A. Mufutau's doctoral thesis to ensure that the language, grammar, punctuation and spelling are academically sound and appropriate, by rectifying errors, wherever these have been identified, and rephrasing sentences that would possibly make one lose sight of the flow of the argument.

Title of the Thesis: "The Engagement of Fathers in Early Childhood Care and Education Provisioning in one education district in the Eastern Cape Province."

Editor's Name: Jabulani Mkhize

Signature : 

Date : 9 March 2018

Contact Details: jmkhize@ufh.ac.za

Qualifications: PhD (English)